



KUMO DESU GA, NANI KA?

Chapters 251 - 300

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Chapter 251 - Scarier Than An Oni

Wh, what should I do? Th, the other dimension I sealed Kuro in, has a different flow of time to the present world. Because of that, though I can infer what's going on inside the other dimension, the time lag is absolutely huge. That's why I didn't realise that there were signs that Kuro's seal was breaking.

What should I do? What can I do?

- 1 - Dear Shiraori suddenly comes up with an idea for a counter attack.
- 2 - My friends come save me.
- 3 - Nothing can be done. Reality is cruel.

Yeah. The answer is number 3!

Well, there's really nothing that can be done. Kuro is stronger than me anyway. Besides, for 2, I got no friends anyway! Hah-hah-hah.

Okay, maybe I should stop messing around and come up with a serious countermeasure. Saying that though, it's obvious what I have to do. If he's hostile then eliminate him. Otherwise, wait and see for a while. If possible I'd prefer it if he's not hostile though.

After breaking out from the seal, Kuro is heading towards vampire girl and oni-kun. Hrm. Does he intend to get rid of oni-kun perhaps? For now, I don't want to get vampire girl involved though. I guess I'll prepare to save her at any time.

Regarding that vampire girl though, she's sure been mangled by oni-kun. Now that oni-kun has activated Wrath, she's unable to handle his attacks, and damage is slowly building up. Even with the golden combo of Future Prediction and Thought Acceleration, if she's been continuously attacked at an unavoidable speed then they're useless. It seems that she's able to endure it with the defensive power of the Dragon Scales, but how long will that last I wonder.

Ah, she's been decapitated. Or, so I thought but she catches her head in midair and sticks it back on.

WOW!? You can actually do that!? What the, I want to try that too! Ah, no, never mind. It seems painful.

However, well, it's enough of a one-sided defensive battle that she got decapitated. I guess this is game over huh.

Hm? Vampire girl, is intending to do something? Don't tell me she's thinking of using Envy? Ah, she IS intending to use it. Whether or not she's going to be killed, that's not something you should use. It's punishment time for you later okay.

Well, she doesn't activate it. Since before that happens, Kuro arrives.

Kuro lands between vampire girl and oni-kun. Oni-kun slashes at Kuro, but gets beaten easily. I don't know what she's thinking but vampire girl tries to crash Vermillion Sea into Kuro. OI, FOOL, STOP! Vermillion Sea is simply erased completely by Kuro's barrier. Of course such an attack would never work on Kuro.

Hey, wait! Vampire girl, you just used Envy right!? You actually used it!? What are you doing? Okay, PUNISHMENT TIME is booked.

Kuro grabs vampire girl's head. I stand ready to go rescue her immediately if it looks bad. But, my worry is misplaced, and Kuro simply knocks her unconscious.

Then, Kuro pummels oni-kun. Really, it's such a one-sided beat-down that the only word that works is "pummels". A "don't try this at home kids" level of pummelling. Perhaps his soul is starting to lose power, as even regeneration can't keep up.

Ah, Wrath has expired. Ahh! I see, I see. Wrath also uses the power of the soul to activate, so if the underlying power runs out then the activation also stops. So, if the activation stops, I guess his sanity will more or less return. So long as his sanity hasn't been destroyed already at least. But, it seems I don't have to worry about that. While he was fighting vampire girl I was thinking that maybe his logical reasoning power still remained anyway.

「Are you satisfied with this?」

Kuro speaks to one of my clones. Oh my. What are you talking about?

「I know, if I kill this oni, I will turn you bastard and D into my enemy, right?」

Eh? That's not actually the case though. Or rather, D is in the middle of critical work so probably can't come.

「Even if this guy is a victim. The anger I am feeling now, venting my anger by hitting anyone makes me feel refreshed. It can't be helped, this is my revenge.」

Humph. In short, Kuro currently has no intention to oppose me for now. Sounds like a nice deal to me. It seems like he's happened to fall under various rather magnificent misconceptions, but that's convenient for me. I've got no obligation to correct him anyway, so let's just leave him to his misconceptions then.

For now, I retrieve the fallen vampire girl and oni-kun into a space that I open. After confirming that, Kuro teleported. It seems that he teleported to the Demon King. I guess I should go too.

It's about time that I should inform the Demon King about my final objective and the means. It's probably better if Kuro is told some of that as well. Based on Kuro's reaction when he finds out, Kuro's future will then change. Either way, I can expect that he'll oppose my final objective though.

Nevertheless, Kuro, is strong. A vastly lower rank person can't fully see the whole story, but a portion can be seen. I can't overlook how he broke my seal a lot faster than I predicted either. With this, it seems that I must revise my evaluation of him upwards. If Kuro and I go head to head right now, my chances of winning, are maybe around 20%? Even then, since I don't really understand Kuro's true strength I can't say for sure. I have quite a high evaluation of him, but it's possible that he exceeds even that.

As for my current strength, even amongst the lower ranked gods it's the lowest of the low. In comparison, my prediction based on what I glimpsed in the current situation, is that Kuro's strength is about that of a lower ranked god just a step below a middle ranked god. Normally I'd have no chance of winning. The qualitative difference is something like, if I'm level 1000 then Kuro feels like he's a step below reaching level 10,000.

However, I have been refining my abilities with the assumption of facing Kuro. Even if I cannot hope to compete in raw power, I'm sharpening my abilities to

be something special. I can only win depending upon the gap in affinity. Same as always.

Yes, the same as always. Fighting higher ranked opponents, that's what I've been doing the whole time since I was born into this world. Each time I gained victory using my threads and poison to take them unawares. This will be the same.

Although, that's a long way off still. I teleport to the Demon King's location. There, the Demon King and Kuro are waiting. Now then, how shall I begin?

Translation notes:

A small note regarding the "Golden combo" - Shiro refers to "Future Foresight" (see chapter 189 for an example) but what Sophia actually currently has is "Future Vision". Naturally, these skills are related so it's not "wrong" but perhaps Shiro is thinking about her own memory of using it rather than what Sophia has right now.

Kuro's words are all from "Oni VS Oni ⑥".

Chapter 252 - The Curse Of Kindness

「Shiro-chan. So is it true that you've been getting up to all sorts of things then?」

The first thing the Demon King asks for, is to demand an explanation. Contrary to the playful mood the Demon King normally always has, she has a dark, preoccupied and dignified voice like you would not believe. Well, that's the Demon King's original voice for sure. Before she degenerated by intermingling with one of my clones. Indeed, this is where Balto bows his head in fear, sort of thing. Before the present Demon King, there's only a very few who wouldn't be fearful. If you have no need to be scared, then you sure need a lot of resolve. If I'm not the one scared here, it's going to be one of them, isn't it? I'm on the "no need to be scared" side though.

Without replying to the Demon King's question, I open my eyes. The Demon King grimaces for a moment, that's all. She endured the fear from my eyes.

「What are you playing at?」

A very cold sounding tone. Depending on your answer you won't get off lightly - that intent comes across clearly to me.

「Secrets.」

Saying that while pointing at Kuro, I lightly dodge the pressure from the Demon King. The Demon King changes target to him.

「What does this mean?」

Kuro stands there unmoving with his arms folded, with his forehead furrowed. Clearly he's wavering between whether he should answer or not.

「After coming this far, being secretive would be equivalent to betrayal I guess.」

Kuro breathed a heavy sigh, then he opened his mouth speak as if in resignation.

「I'll start with the conclusion. The degradation of the souls circulating in this

world has become severe.」

Hey, isn't starting from the conclusion jumping ahead too far? Is there someone around who can comprehend the situation from only that?

「How severe?」

There was one! Ehh? Was the Demon King always this quick thinking? Or is it that? As soon as she goes into serious mode she gets smart, or something?

「A portion are already showing signs of soul collapse.」

「Why did you keep this from me?」

「If I'd told you, then what?」

With the heavy atmosphere, both of them sink into silence. Ahh, so uncomfortable. Mind if I leave then? That's a no, then? Okay then.

「Answer me honestly. With the actions I've taken as Demon King, will the recovery of MA Energy be completed?」

「It's impossible.」

Kuro answers immediately. The Demon King sits with her head down, shoulders trembling.

For her to become the Demon King, just how much determination did she have and hoped for, I can't even begin to imagine. However, after honouring the Goddess's directions for so long, this Demon King who watched over the world for so long, for the first time she took action against the Goddess's will. For this Demon King who honours the Goddess more than any other, that definitely required some serious determination. All the more so since she knew that if she became the Demon King, it was almost certain that she would die.

This is where, I shall show the way.

「In that case we simply destroy the System.」

To the two driven into a hopeless blind alley, they'll receive my suggestion like it is a dream, I'm sure. Naturally, they'll completely jump at the offer.

「What do you mean?」

「For the energy used to maintain the System, the MA Energy comprises about 90%. In short, if we can simply supplement the missing 10% from somewhere,

then by dismantling the System, we can meet the demands of the MA Energy.」

It's simple. It's the System that D, that rotten fiend, developed. It's not something that you can capture by a frontal assault. There's definitely a backdoor. Considering D's personality, the sneaky bastard, then at a place you can't normally reach, there will be a hidden backdoor.

「Is that, even possible?」

「Shiro-chan, can it be done?」

The two gaze at me. Doubt on the one hand, hope on the other.

「It can. As preparation for that, I had to sacrifice the lot that Kuro had isolated.」

That's actually not true though. But since it's not necessarily incorrect then if I say it like this, Kuro will then read too much into it of his own accord and should come to a misunderstanding.

「So, that's why you did that.」

There, you see.

「I'll complete all the preliminary work myself. What's left, is to secure the missing 10%. So that it's possible to top up a shortage in case of a miscalculation, it's necessary to target meeting the demands of 15% of the MA Energy.」

How would you achieve that? Cause a war, and in addition to that, one on an unprecedented scale in history. The plan that the Demon King is advancing, needs to be enlarged still further. Also, there's one other thing.

「Enlarge the scale of the war. In addition, kill the Hero.」

Kuro reacts to that with a twitch. That's right, Kuro would respond to the killing of the Hero. However, I can't yield on this.

「Before the System collapses, bring about the end of the Hero System. With the Energy collected from the Hero System, I expect an improvement of about 3%.」

While 3% might sound small, in reality it's a huge amount of Energy. I want to secure that no matter what. Besides, if I can get rid of the Hero, the survival

chances for the Demon King will raise with just that.

The Hero exists to defeat the Demon King. That is a law that disregards the difference in ability. The Demon King will always be beaten by a Hero. Even if the current generation's Hero is beaten back, then the next one, or the one after. With each passing generation, the likelihood of the Demon King's victory decreases. It's not a matter of status or skills, it's because it is established that way. I cannot conceive that the current Demon King could lose to this generation's Hero. I cannot conceive it, but it's better to make doubly sure.

「I guess, such a sacrifice is needed.」

「What started it all, was the negligence of Kuro as the administrator.」

At my words, Kuro's expression becomes twisted. I sure am cruel. It's certainly true that if Kuro had done the right thing then the current situation would never have occurred. However, Kuro could never have done such a thing. Like with the Demon King, he's a pathetic man who prioritised the Goddess's kindness.

Because of that kindness, the irony is that this world is teetering on the brink of destruction. You could even say it's a farce. That's why, I shall destroy it all.

I'm not lying to them. If the System can be compensated for, the Energy needs of this world can be met. However, to destroy the System means that the skills and statuses of this world will be lost. For that which is rooted in the soul, that means nothing other than the forced removal of them. Accordingly, those with many skills, those with high status values, at the time of removal there will be a heavy burden on the soul. Like with sensei recently.

I'm not lying to them. If the System can be destroyed, the world will be saved. However, in compensation for that, that will result in the death of a large amount of this world's population. I am simply staying silent on that.

Translation notes:

“Mind if I leave then? That's a no, then? Okay then.” - to be clear, this is Shiro talking to herself in a weird way.

Chapter 253 - PUNISHMENT TIME (For Real)

The explanation to Kuro and the Demon King has finished. What they do afterwards is up to each of them. Well, in the situation where they can't see my hidden cards, if something so tasty is dangled in front of them, it's obvious that they'll take the bait though. Kuro still seems to be a bit suspicious, but the Demon King should take the bait. After all, there's no other option available.

Even if they don't take the bait then it's okay. I'll just have to reveal my hidden cards. Ultimately, the Demon King will definitely come to my side. Then, she should be more than willing to transfer the authority of the Ruler of Gluttony to me. If that happens, then there's only a few remaining.

I turn away from Kuro and the Demon King, teleporting. It seems the two of them need a bit more time to consider it. After they think it through, they just need to come begging to me. In the other dimension I teleported to, the vampire girl is sullenly standing with a daunting pose. It seems she woke up at some point.

「Who, was that?」

By “that”, I guess she's referring to Kuro. She thinks that he got in the way of her fight with oni-kun it seems. Or rather, he did actually, yeah.

「Kuro. He's the same kind as me.」

「The same kind as goshujin-sama.」

When I said he's the same kind as me, vampire girl made an understanding expression. But, the dangerous light in her eyes doesn't weaken.

「Let me meet him.」

What'll you do on meeting him - I don't even need to ask I guess. She'll definitely bite his head off. I mean that she'll literally try to bite his head off. When she found out that he was the same kind as me she should have understood that she has no chance of winning, yet look at this damn battle junkie. Well, it's not like I have duty to let her meet him anyway.

「No.」

「Why not?」

In the first place, why should I have to go out of my way to do that? Particularly when I know for sure that you'll cause problems. Do you think that all your desires have to be granted? Aren't you pushing your luck a BIT too far? It seems I have to make you remember your own position, even if just a bit.

「The man ruined everything just when things were finally getting good. He better take responsibility.」

「I don't care.」

「I do care though! Let me meet him already!」

「Be silent.」

I raise my voice a little and open my eyes. That instant, vampire girl's body shakes with a start and she shrinks in fear. Yup, yup. I see you do comprehend the difference in strength. Yet she still flared up at me that much - the fighting instincts of vampires sure are running wild huh. Well, time for a little lecture, including that.

「Envy, you used it didn't you?」

「What might you be talking about?」

Vampire girl tries to play dumb, but her eyes are swimming like mad. Lies are bad okay, BAD.

「Eyow!」

I grab her cheek hard and pull. You used it didn't you-u? Lies are bad okay-y? I was watching you know-w?

I pull the cheek that I grabbed around - up and down, left and right. Vampire girl grabs my arm and tries to pull it off somehow, but unfortunately for you with my superior physical strength that'll just be futile resistance. Humph, even before my apotheosis my physical strength, as part of my offensive ability, vastly exceeded vampire girl's, so there's no reason why I would lose now after my upgrade. Did you think those thin arms could beat my thin arms eh? Ah, isn't it more like mine are thinner? Yeah, let's ignore the matter of thin arms.

「I'm sorrehy! I'm sorrehy!」

Vampire girl apologies with tears in her eyes, but I'm not going to forgive you yet. Though saying that, there's nothing left for me to do.

I release vampire girl's cheek. While at it I connect the dimension to another, inviting the person there in.

「Ojou-sama.」

Vampire girl turns her gaze to Mera, who steps in from the other dimension, as if seeking help.

「Ojou-sama, your charm will not work on me.」

Mera slowly shakes his head, then slaps vampire girl in the face.

「Eh? Eh?」

Vampire girl blinks her eyes with surprise, unable to take in the situation.

「Ojou-sama, would your parents be proud of you as you are now?」

「That's, that would, eh? Huh? 」

At Mera's words, vampire girl tries to object by reflex.

「Ojou-sama, to surrender yourself to a vampire's instincts in self-indulgence, that must have been pleasant I'm sure. Nobody will defy you. Nobody can defy you. Yes, you yourself enticed them after all. Was it like a dream? Or perhaps, did you actually think it was a dream? Did you actually think those incidents were all just in a dream, with no relation to reality?」

The butterfly dream. The current vampire girl is overwhelmed by her desires as a vampire, and the distinction between dreams and reality has become vague I guess. Or perhaps otherwise, it's that her consciousness as a vampire has become too strong, and her consciousness as a human has been shrugged off completely.

「Ojou-sama, I shall ask again. As you are now, are you walking the life your parents proudly walked?」

Vampire girl doesn't answer. She can't answer. The retainer she trusted the most, the one she never thought would betray her has slapped her, waking her from the dream. Her dazed face is slowly becoming pale.

「Ojou-sama, I cannot serve you as my master. That is because my masters are your parents.」

As the subject of her parents is raised, inside of her, vampire girl's consciousness as a human is jolted.

「Therefore, even if I have become a vampire with you as my “parent”, that cannot overwrite what is in my heart.」

Those words, at first glance, appear to be a snub. To the vampire girl, Mera is a significant existence. He is someone who has continuously supported her at her side since she was a child after all. If she is snubbed by such a man, how will she react.

Vampire girl mutely shakes her head in denial. Those eyes have a suspicious light in them for an instant. But, what brings her back, is a second slap.

「I have already devoted my heart to your parents. I will not hesitate any more. I will doubt no more.」

Vampire girl hangs her head in shame. Her shoulders tremble repeatedly.

「Your parents, have entrusted only one thing to me. To take care of you, ojou-sama. No more than that.」

Slowly, Mera hugs vampire girl in a gentle embrace.

「I was asked to take care of you. I shall watch over you until I die, ojou-sama. I will never abandon you. If you lose your way then I shall remonstrate you. Until you return to the proper path, I shall raise this hand as often as necessary. However, if there is something I can do, then please let me lend a hand.」

In the end, if you ask what is the best punishment, then the most effective one is for a child to be scolded by their guardian. With regards to the circumstances in which vampire girl fell into such a bad state, her guardian Mera not being by her side is likely a significant factor. The Demon King said that if these two were allowed to be together then they would depend upon each other. However, I don't particularly have a problem with that. Being able to depend upon someone, if that's the case then isn't that a blessing in itself? For me, that is something I'll never be able to do after all.

Whatever happens next is up to the two of them. However, I personally think that the two of them should be allowed to work together as much as possible. I shall discuss that with the Demon King later.

From that dimension, I gently drop off the two of them in Mera's private room. Okay, it's the last thing remaining, but I guess I'll go visit the other reincarnator now.

Translation notes:

"Same kind" - the word used here can mean same kind of "species", "class" or "category".

"Thin arms" - there's this cliché in combat where a large muscular guy taunts their weaker seeming opponent's thin arms. Shiro is metaphorically acting like this, even though she actually has thinner arms.

"The butterfly dream" - a reference to a certain philosophical riddle.

Vampire parent - presumably Mera is referring to the fact that he became a vampire due to Sophia's power.

Chapter 254 - The Oni, The Spider

I teleport to the other dimension oni-kun is in. Oni-kun is still unconscious. Well, after being pummelled to that extent, he wouldn't be about to wake up immediately.

I guess there's no other way, so I apply some recovery on him. If he recovers too much then it's possible that Wrath will reactivate, so all in moderation. While looking at his condition after applying the recovery, before long oni-kun starts groaning and then opened his eyes.

「Uh, Wakaba-san?」

Oni-kun murmurs in a quiet voice. Yes, YES. Here's everyone's idol, Wakaba Hiiro! Argh, so annoying. Why do I have to substitute for D eh.

「I'm called Shiro here.」

「I see. I'm Wrath. Would you mind addressing me with that?」

Raasu, ah, Wrath huh. I don't know the circumstances for it, but it seems oni-kun also dislikes being addressed with his previous name. That works for me too. With neither of us prying into the other, there's now no motivation to discuss our names any further.

「Then, Shiro-san. Where is this?」

Well, you would feel uneasy yeah. The other dimension that we're currently in, is pretty much in it's default settings. In other words, it's nothing but a large space. There's nothing - not even light. A totally black space. However, it does contain air and such that is the minimum necessary to support life. If not for that, you'd be dying for suffocation, or dying from the abnormal pressure from the vacuum state. Beyond that, the setting has been changed so that it's not just dark and it's possible to see. From oni-kun's point of view, in this pure black space with nothing else, all that's visible is my own figure in isolation. Well, he would want to know where this was.

「Another dimension that I created.」

「Another dimension. I thought so.」

Oh that's unexpected, oni-kun murmured "I thought so". Did he realise that this wasn't a normal space I wonder?

「I have Space Magic as well after all. I had realised that this wasn't a normal space.」

Though I'm sure it didn't show up on my face, oni-kun read between the lines on my doubt and added to his explanation. Ahh, that's right, it was when he was still like that pseudo goblin. He possessed Space Magic then. I'd forgotten that I'd also interfered and peered inside during the match. Well, it never seemed like it would develop to the level where it could threaten me, so I hadn't paid much attention to it.

As the level in Space Magic rises, it becomes possible for it to damage even me. It's true that I've specialised in Space Magic, but it's also because when Space Magic evolves to the level of Dimension Magic, it does have the track record of even delivering an attack on that D. That's quite an underhanded trick I'm sure, but going by that previous example, then I can't say that nobody would ever be able to reproduce it. That's why it's worth keeping a lookout on Space Magic users, but with oni-kun's current level I had judged that it wouldn't be able to affect me.

「There's many things that I'd like to ask, but is it possible that it's not just us but the entire class who have been reborn into this world?」

Hm? You're asking that? Ah, well, I guess so. When someone you know from your previous world appears before you, you would think that I guess. Particularly because in oni-kun's case, due to him running wild with Wrath he wasn't in any condition to be able communicate with others anyway. There wasn't any way to inform him about the situation of the reincarnators.

「Everyone is here.」

「Everyone. That sure is unexpected.」

Though oni-kun says it's unexpected he doesn't really look to be that shocked. With the example of me being before him it certainly establishes that there's some kind of pattern.

Oni-kun in his previous life as Sasajima-kun, had the image of being quite quick-thinking I recall. Something like, he could read the mood on the spot and

chose his words appropriately. Though rather than it being like he was worldly wise, it felt more like that he was desperately trying to prevent the peace from being disturbed. Well, being able to speak after reading the mood, that in it's own way indicates that he's quick-witted. Talking about his mind here, I don't necessarily mean in the sense that he's good or bad at studying. There's plenty of people who are fools even though they're good at studying, and conversely there's also capable people who are bad at studying. In Sasajima-kun's case, he was reasonably good at studying, so in that sense he is fairly smart.

「Then, Yamada Shunsuke and Ooshima Kanata, do you know if those two are well?」

When oni-kun asks the question “do I know”, he seems confident that I will give him an answer. Well, at the point when I said that everyone in the class is here, it can be predicted that I have knowledge on the reincarnators. I don't really have a reason to hide it anyway, so I might as well tell him this much. Anyhow, it's not like oni-kun would be able to find out that I'm not limited to just “having knowledge” either.

「They're both well.」

One of them has had a sex change though! But she's well enough, so I'm not lying.

「I see. That's a relief.」

With just that oni-kun's face relaxes in what seems like his true feelings. Hrm. I understand this much. Oni-kun is extremely cautious of me. Well, I guess so huh. Suddenly pummelled by some unknown guy in black, then when he wakes up someone he knows from his previous life is there. And in another dimension too. I'm sure it'd be impossible not to be cautious instead huh. Ah, possibly oni-kun is a more simple minded type, if that's the case, then he should have vented his questions at me whilst he was unable to think normally. My mind went all over the place for a minute there, but after thinking all sorts of things I get the feeling that maybe I hit the bull's-eye.

Well, for me, that would be preferable I guess. I'd also be grateful if fewer words are needed. But saying that still, I can't talk so much all in one go! When I was able to talk with the Demon King and Kuro earlier, half of that was because

the Demon King was one of them, and the other half was because I had already decided on my words in advance and had practiced my lines you see! So, if you think I'll be able to fluently reply in a question and answer session where I've not determined what to say already, then you're greatly mistaken! That being the case, oni-kun. Sorry but please be prepared for this to take QUITE a long time. Don't worry, while we're in this space, not that much time will pass outside. So go ahead and use up as much time as you want.

Translation notes:

“Raasu” - this is how the English word “wrath” is written in Japanese phonetics. Sasajima calls himself “ラース” (Raasu) while in the 7 deadly sins sense “憤怒” translates as “Wrath”. So in the original Japanese there is an obvious distinction here but it's not possible to keep this distinction in English.

We don't see when Shiro evolved Space Magic to level 10 and it evolved into Dimension Magic but in chapter 129 her Dimension Magic evolves to level 2.

Chapter 255 - Three Sentences Is My Limit!

Q: What happened while I was unconscious?

A: The guy called Kuro beat you up and by making you waste your energy, the power that was sustaining Wrath was completely used up. That's why you can now stay sane. To confirm that you really wouldn't activate Wrath for now, I quarantined you safely in another dimension.

Q: Who is "Kuro"?

A: A god of this world. However, he's an indecisive loser.

Q: What connection does he have with you, Shiro-san?

A: For now he's cooperating with us. For the sake of convenience he's expected to be placed under the Demon King.

Q: The Demon King?

A: The Demon King.

Q: Umm, by "Demon King" you mean the king of the demons?

A: Literally no, but you can think of it like that for now.

Q: What about that girl I was fighting?

A: She's a vampire. She's currently pretty much living in the demon country. Incidentally, she's a reincarnator.

Q: What's her name in the previous world?

A: Negishi Akiko.

Q: Her attitude has really changed.

A: She's been through a lot.

Q: Is Negishi-san okay?

A: She's okay. She's been punished a bit for recklessly fighting you though.

Q: I, I see. I've done something bad then I guess.

A: That's not the case. You don't need to worry about it.

Q: What are the other reincarnators doing?

A: Most are under protection of sensei with the elves. Some of the others are at

a human academy though. Yamada-kun and Ooshima-kun are among the academy group.

Q: Is it far from here to that human academy?

A: It's far.

Q: What will happen to me now?

A: Nothing. Since your sanity has returned you can do what you like.

The end - question and answer session is complete. Well done me, really well done me. Incidentally, as for how much time it took, I'm not going to say. Yeah, I became hungry in the middle and left the room once to go get some food, but it didn't take that long, really. Yes, really. Let's just leave it at that.

When I told oni-kun that he can do what he wants, he got a troubled expression instead as if pondering something or other. Well, suddenly being told you can do as you like and being abandoned, I guess you'd be troubled. Should I hand him a lifeline perhaps? We're basically both reincarnators, so I won't be stingy on lending a hand.

「If you have nowhere to go, then stay at my place for now?」

I called it “my place”, but it's really Balto's. Alternatively I can lend you this other dimension as well. Ah, but, if I'm not here then it'll become impossible for him to come and go, and he'll die.

「I could, I guess. To be honest, I really don't know what I should do from now on.」

And thus, rather than taking in a lost lamb, I'm taking in a lost oni-kun. First of all since him being half-naked is a bit out there, I returned to Balto's mansion and had the servants pick out some suitable mens clothes, and had him try them on. Because oni-kun under the influence of Wrath had lost his reason, he had the style like an oni out of a fairy-tale with just a single pair of pants to his wardrobe. Him at least just wearing the pants, was perhaps due to the last remaining sense of reason he had.

Then, after he put on the clothes, wafting in the air was this “something ain't right” feeling. Oni-kun's face is the same as in his previous life, a Japanese person's face. Even if his species is an oni, that's still Japanese style. Japanese

clothes or for the sake of argument perhaps some Chinese style armour would be better, but there's a huge sense of unease with him wearing western clothes. Rather unusually for me, I unthinkingly muttered out loud that "it doesn't suit you" though. It sure seems that he heard that mutter, and oni-kun seemed to be plainly shocked at it.

Hrm-mm. Somehow it just doesn't match. After all he's an oni swordbearer with a purely Japanese face, so try imagining him wearing the clothes of a western aristocrat? Ah, Balto is basically like that, amongst the demons he's at the very upper echelons, so I guess they only have suits for noblemen stored there. An oni clothed in a nobleman's suit. Somehow, while the person himself might be able to accept it, I cannot. Oni-kun's original face has quite well balanced features anyway, and on becoming an oni he's gotten taller, so he is by no means unattractive. He's not at all, but there's this uncomfortable feeling.

Yeah. Let's go with Japanese clothes. However, Japanese clothes don't exist though. On the long journey to the Demon King's castle, we went around all sorts of places, but there were no Japanese clothes. Or rather, Japanese culture itself doesn't exist. It's another world so it's just natural though. I somehow thought that if it's D then it wouldn't be strange for her to forcibly establish a fake Japanese culture, but there was none.

If there's none then I can just make one then. Muhaha. There are no clothes that my threads cannot make! What kind of Japanese clothes would suit him best I wonder?

Ah, before that I gotta talk with Balto. For now, I'll have oni-kun wait in my own room. When I had asked the servants who went to get the clothes about if there were any available rooms, I heard that half the rooms in the mansion are available. Ah, well, it's extremely spacious but there's surprisingly few people after all. The master, Balto, doesn't come back often either.

There no problem in terms of available space for oni-kun to stay here. I just need to get the OK from the mansion's master. I teleport to the Demon King's castle, and knock on the door of the office that Balto uses everyday. Even I have some common sense. As for suddenly teleporting into the middle of a room, it's not like I've never done it but I can't say I rarely do it either.

「Come in.」

I got permission to enter the room, so I open the door. This really is the Demon King's castle at the summit of the demons, so normally I should pay attention to how I open the door too, but unfortunately such trivial manners are beyond me. I open the door trying to be as careful as possible. Besides, whenever I'm forced to open my mouth, being helpless with things like tone or number of words are a far bigger problem than mere manners.

While thinking such things I enter the opened door, and there my prey Balto is fighting with documents. That's fine. It's always the case that Balto seems about to die from being buried in documents. However, at the reception table in the office, his younger brother also being there looking over documents is unexpected.

「What do you want?」

The hoodlum glared! The spider guards the door!

「Oi! Don't just up and leave without stating your business!」

Ugh. Why is this guy here? What a blunder. Since I teleported and knocked on the door immediately, I didn't pay any attention to the possibility of others being there. If I'd known he was here I wouldn't have wasted my time. Argh, what a pain.

Chapter 256 - I Brought A Man Home, So Let Him Stay < What The Fuck!?

These days I want to go home as early as possible. No really, for a middle-class girl like me, I'm really bad with bastards who glare at you like they want to kill you. See, from the point of view of a good citizen, even a "delinquent" is an annoying existence right? Normally you'd avoid them, right? So naturally I'll return home.

「You just gonna return hey!?!」

Ack!?! How did he know?

Ugh. Look, my communication skills are weak okay. I'm bad at dealing with intense types like you okay. "Delinquent" types and so on, well, I've not really had much to do with them. Until now those around me have mostly been composed types, so they can generally understand me when I say very little, so I've been able to get by, but THIS guy is no good. Really, he just comes at me without the slightest regard for my situation.

「Hey, seriously what do you want?」

See, just like this. When talking with the Demon King for example I can just talk, but she's the exception where I can talk to her normally. Vampire girl doesn't really want to talk to me in the first place. Argnar and the like will patiently wait for me to begin to talk. But, THIS guy is always forcing me like "speak already, speak right now".

Umm, what did I come to ask again?

「Hey! We're busy here okay. State your business already.」

There! Don't rush me!

「Oni, freeloader, OK?」

See! If you rush me then I can only manage to say a list cryptic words!

「Huh? What's that mean?」

That's your fault, yours! Please let me talk at my own pace!

「Blow, you're crowding Shiro-san and bothering her. In the first place, she did not come here to see you, but me, right?」

「Uh, no, that's...」

「Back down, okay. Shiro-san, I am sorry about my brother.」

「If you say so, aniki.」

Nice, Balto. You're not being overworked by the Demon King for nothing. The nice guy who can read the mood.

「Well then, please allow me to hear your request once more.」

Umm, just a moment. Oni, doesn't make sense so, man? Sheltered, or rather, picked up a man? He's downhearted so I want to let him recuperate for a while. Yup.

「I picked up a man. I want to put him up at the mansion.」

Ka-thump! As that sound resounds, the hoodlum yelled loudly. What's this guy doing?

「Wh, what the fuck!?!」

Uh, what's with that halting intonation? Same to you, what the fuck?

「Shiro-san. My place is not a dating spot though. If it is just one person then I shall ignore it, but please keep it to a minimum.」

Hm? Hmm? HMM!?

W, wrong! I don't mean it that way! Yikes! Now I get why the hoodlum yelled! The words I said, could also be interpreted that way huh!

「Wrong.」

If I don't bother to correct this my honour will suffer. Though others might grin and ignore me while I deny everything, I'd hate to be labelled that way.

[It's true. It just happened to be someone who looked like me, so please don't think of me as a cheap woman or something.]

I felt like I heard that somehow but it's just your imagination. Dear maid, there's an idle god here. Please drag her away immediately.

「Y, yo, you, ha, have a guy!?!」

Bug off shut up die! It was a slip of the tongue.

「He's an old friend. He may be useful for the war.」

I make a plea that we don't have such a relationship, plus I hint about potential gains. With this, setting aside the hoodlum, I should at least be able to get Balto to assent! I don't know how useful he would actually be in practice though.

「Ahh, so that's what it was. In that case then there is no problem. By the way, how useful do you think he would be?」

There, you see. A reasonable man is quite different after all. Totally different from the still trembling dim-witted hoodlum.

「Significantly.」

「Is that so. Then that sure is promising.」

Balto showed a strained seeming face for an instant, but I'll pretend I never saw it. Balto is also assisting the Demon King out of sheer terror only, so like with Argnar he can't be fully trusted. If he thinks our power has weakened, he would become dangerous to us without hesitation. Even then Balto is opposed to increasing the strength of the Demon King's army.

Well, Balto's concern is wide of the mark though. Oni-kun hasn't even met the Demon King anyway. I don't know how oni-kun's feels about this yet either, so it's up to him to decide what to do next. Whether he actually wants to help our war efforts, or not, that's still a theoretical question. I have no intention to force him. However, if by his own will he decides to stand in opposition to me then I won't show mercy.

「I shall contact the mansion myself. I am sure that there are plenty of rooms that are available.」

「Thank you.」

At my thanks, Balto shows a surprised expression. I can show gratitude at least you know.

I've gotten Balto's permission, so there's nothing else here for me. I'll clear

out before the hoodlum recovers from his freeze.

* * * * *

「Blow.」
「Uwah!? Aniki, where is she?」
「She left long ago.」
「I, I see.」
「From the look of things, it seems he’s not her boyfriend.」
「Well, it’s not like, I particular care about that though!」
「Blow, I can’t really recommend her, but what is good about her?」
「Wh, what are you talking about?」
「Sigh. My little brother who wasn’t interested in romance all this time, to think he’d then go for someone so incredibly difficult.」
「You’re wrong! It’s just that, when I see her, I suddenly get these intense palpitations!」
「Sigh.」

Author’s comment:

The suspension bridge effect: This is that when encountering the opposite sex in moments of anxiety or fear that those are mistaken for romantic feelings. Particularly when anxiety or fear leads to intense palpitations, that is said to become mistaken for feelings of love.

Translation notes:

This is quite an interesting title, though hopefully it makes more sense on reading the chapter. Basically, the “<” character is an arrow indicating that the “what the fuck” part is a reaction to the rest of the line.

It’s hard to keep the distinction in the translation but there’s a very big difference between how Blow and Balto speak with Shiro. Balto is smooth and polite while Blow is more like a yakuza and refers to Balto as “aniki” which is like a “rougher” (street tough) version of “onii-san”. When it’s just them together, Balto speaks more casually.

“Sheltered, or rather, picked up a man” - the word for “picked up” that Shiro uses here is rather more generic and can also mean “take care of” but it normally means something like “picked up” as in “picked up a stone”.

“Dear maid, there’s an idle god here” - most likely a reference to D (last seen being dragged away by maids). btw, note that the quoted line above uses [...] rather than 「...」to differentiate between real spoken text and made up lines.

Blood 27 - Blood Of A Demon

「Ojou-sama, would your parents be proud of you as you are now?」

Merazofis's words are still reverberating through my head. To me, those words bring about a shock like I'm being hit with a blunt weapon.

When I tried to think back on things, I became aware that my recent behaviour had become erratic. I would use Charm to abduct boys and devour their blood. If the me from my previous life saw this, such scenes would make her faint.

Despite that, such actions didn't even leave much of an impression on me. As if it was completely natural, I committed those deeds without any self-awareness. Thinking back on it, it was abnormal. But despite that, even though I'm self-aware of that abnormality, even now I don't have any particular feelings for my actions.

Those abnormalities, were normal.

Before I knew it, my body and even my heart too had been reduced to a vampire. When I think about that, I become somewhat sad. It's like "ahh, I cannot return to being human anymore." Conversely I could say however, that in the end it's only to the degree that I was somewhat sad.

Since I fought that "kijin", one day has passed and I returned to the academy. At the academy, the incident is being called the act of a mysterious monster, and that the appearance and abilities of that monster are unknown. All the witnesses apart from me had been killed anyway, and there are no longer any traces of the battle in the forest. I can only think that the kijin was destroyed by some unimaginable might.

At the academy, it's established that I exterminated the demon. That's half right and half wrong. It's true that I fought that kijin, but the one who defeated him is likely that Kuro who is the same kind as goshujin-sama. Since he handled me as easily as breathing, it's certain that the kijin that I was fighting equally with also suffered the same fate.

I don't know what happened to that kijin afterwards. Merely that goshujin-sama warned me not to say anything stupid. However, based on what I hear at the academy, I realise that somehow or other goshujin-sama has intervened to distort the facts. That being the case, then if I ask goshujin-sama, I should be able to find out what happened to that kijin.

However, I've been unable to ask. When I have no business with her, goshujin-sama will just suddenly appear, but at times like this I can just never get hold of her. That's because, although she's a spider, she wanders around whimsically like a cat. Thanks to that I'm at my wit's end.

In addition, Merazofis's words, like something persistently stuck between your teeth, leaves me unsettled. Would my parents be proud? To my human parents, there's no way that they would be proud of how I am now. I am a vampire. My way of thinking and my values, even my way of life are all different. Something like being proud to be human, has been thrown away long ago. Even then, it was without any kind of deep feeling - about as casually as trash would be thrown away into a rubbish bin. So much so that if that hadn't been pointed out to me, I wouldn't even have realised it.

However, I changed now that I've realised it. I now clearly realise the difference between a human and a vampire. I realise it completely.

「Sophia, apparently you defeated a terrible monster? You're as amazing as ever.」

The prince of the academy, Waldo bestowed upon me those words of praise. Normally I would have simply have said "thank you" spontaneously. However, today I can't do that.

「Ojou-sama, would your parents be proud of you as you are now?」

As if like a rumour that can't be shut out by closing your ears, Merazofis's words echo distinctly. At the same time that happened, I casually appraised Waldo, and written in his status's abnormal conditions was the word "Charm".

I feel nauseous. I couldn't help turning my back on Waldo and breaking into a run. Along the way many people I recognised also called out to me. Each time, the nausea got even worse.

I dived into the toilets and shut myself away. Though I felt nauseous, the only thing that came out from my mouth was a muffled groan. After a while I got control of my mouth, and leant against the toilet wall.

This is nostalgic somehow. Though I'd never done this in my current life, in my previous life I had often taken refuge in the toilets like this. Though because the toilets had pointlessly strong smelling perfume, it just made my mood even worse and it wasn't a place I particularly wanted to take refuge in. I couldn't help it since there was nowhere else I could seek refuge in.

Just what am I doing? I was reborn and I have changed. I've become so beautiful that my ugly appearance in my previous life is hard to believe, and my grades at the academy are always at the top. The things that were unobtainable in my past life, have been obtained entirely. Maybe that's why. I have changed, all too much.

This existence of mine, has almost no traces left of the former human known as Negishi Akiko. The only thing remaining, is my envy towards goshujin-sama. The fact that that remains, it's as if it's emphasizing my own ugliness, I can't laugh even if I wanted to.

Ugly. As I am now, when judged by the human value system, I'm a monster that's ugly from the bottom of my heart. But despite that, I carried everything out calmly, without a fragment of guilt, without any doubt, I accepted it as a matter of course. That was, as a result of it being natural for a vampire.

As a vampire, I think as I am now is entirely correct. That this is an everyday occurrence for a vampire. In practice, that was actually an everyday occurrence.

「Ojou-sama, would your parents be proud of you as you are now?」

At least until Merazofis asked me that. Pride? What is pride? After all this time, what can I say I'm proud of?

If, my parents were still alive, what would they think when looking at me now? All the servants who were sacrificed in order to let me escape. How would they see me?

When I considered that far, I impulsively pulled out my elongated canine teeth. The sweet taste of blood spread through my mouth. To actually think

that my own blood is tasty, I'm finally finished as a human. I hurl away my canines into the middle of the toilet. However, the next moment new canines have grown out, returning like never before as if to deny the very fact that I had pulled them out. As if they're telling me that I can never return, I stare in a daze at the canines that I had pulled out.

When I shouldn't even consider being able to live as a human anymore, just what is pride for then. I don't know. I just don't know. If it was going to be like this, I'd rather never have gained self-awareness.

Translation notes:

Regarding the title: while "Blood of an oni" would be more accurate, she's only referring to herself really, not Kyouya/Wrath, so I thought it might be misleading. As I've noted before, in Japanese "vampire" literally means "bloodsucking oni", so it's really about the dark side of her vampire nature.

Sophia refers to Kyouya/Wrath as a "kijin", which literally means "oni person". It's not a real word though but sometimes appears as a name, such as Kijin Seija from Touhou.

Oni 11 - The Status Quo

I accepted Shiro-san's kind offer and have taken up residence at a large mansion. While I am grateful, to be honest though, I'm not used to this. Since half the time in this world I've been living in run-down houses and the other half I've been roaming around having lost control of myself due to Wrath. There were times when I was able to stay at a vacant house that had no owner, or had just lost an owner, but I've never been able to stay at something magnificent like this mansion. Or rather, I feel like I've never even seen a mansion so magnificent even including my previous life. This mansion is so large it wouldn't be an exaggeration to call it a small castle.

After being here for several days, I've been able to ask the mansion's servants about various things. If possible I would have preferred to ask Shiro-san, but she's not someone who talks very often anyway. She wasn't talkative in her previous life either, but here she is almost silent. When we had that exchange after our reunion in the other dimension, I became keenly aware of that fact. The fact that it's difficult to communicate with Shiro-san.

Thus, little by little I asked questions to the people who are the mansion's servants. I had actually wanted to ask all in one go, but because they had jobs to do I felt awkward about interrupting them for a long period. However, maybe it's because of that, but I think I've been able to learn the names and faces of the mansion's servants and been able to talk with them in a fairly relaxed manner. I'm more or less treated as a guest, but I don't have any kind of social position though. Rather than a guest, when I requested that I be thought of as a simple freeloader, I was treated more like a random young child. Thanks to that I've been able to have various conversations, and I've been able to find out what I wanted to know, even if only gradually.

Firstly, it seems this is a country of demons. Before I knew it I'd left the human country, and it seems that I'd walked into the demon territory. However, it couldn't be helped that I hadn't realised that either. There's no visible differences between humans and demons anyway, and there's no

significant difference in lifestyles. If nobody had said so, I wouldn't have realised that they were demons.

In addition, it seems that there's almost nobody who are demi-human, as I am called. For the demons around me, image-wise I had expected a horde of devils, but there's no demons with wings or horns. In short, if I don't hide my horns then it's likely that I would stand out. If I happen to go outside, it seems that it would be better to wear a cap to conceal my horns.

Next, it seems that none of the servants really understand Shiro-san's true identity, so there's various rumours flying around. The Demon King's close aide, the Demon King's younger sister, the Demon King's fixer, and so on. I had heard that she seemed to be an acquaintance of the Demon King, but when I heard it again from other people I was surprised. Even so, after analysing the numerous speculations, it sure seems that she is quite close to the Demon King. There is the opinion that their faces look vaguely similar, so maybe they are actually near relatives. However, that's purely at the limit of rumours, so unless I actually ask her myself then I'm sure I wouldn't find out the truth.

There's many mysteries about Shiro-san. While it is certain that she is a reincarnator like me, I don't know what she's been doing in this world to date. I'm somewhat interested in that. At any rate, it's clear that she's even stronger than me.

Even if I say so for myself, I'm strong. I'm strong enough that there was a time when I even wondered if there was actually anyone who could beat me. Without any pretence, I think that my strength when Wrath is activated even stands out at a global level. But despite all that, it only took seeing her for an instant to realise that I cannot beat her. Without even using the appraisal stone. I don't even really understand why I thought that myself to be honest though. However, my intuition about that, was closer to being a conviction.

If forced to give a reason, I would say that it was due to that other dimension. I have dabbled in Space Magic myself, so I was able to read between the lines in considering how absurd a thing that other dimension really was, though not entirely. That vast area that seemed to extend forever. That space where even the flow of time was manipulated. If I hadn't recognised the face of the person who had created it, I might even have thought that it was the work of a god.

A god, huh. What I just recalled, was that man in black who defeated me during that battle. When facing me who had activated Wrath, that man was able to defeat me as easily as handling a child. When Wrath was activated my status should have hit the maximum possible values. Against that, it shouldn't normally be possible to knock someone down with casual ease. Shiro-san called that man a god. I feel like I should ask what her relationship is with a god, but I wonder if she would simply answer me.

Well, speak of the devil. Shiro-san has visited my room. Her entire body being uniformly white in appearance gives her a special aura, and combined with her inherent beauty somehow brings about a sense of unapproachable holiness. Considering what's changed compared to her previous existence, not only the hair on her head but her eyebrows and even the colour of her skin has become white. In addition, it also seems to be the case that her eyes are always closed. I don't really know why her eyes are closed though. However, according to the servants' rumours, when her eyes open your soul gets sucked out, apparently.

When I invite Shiro-san into my room, I noticed that there was someone unexpected behind her.

「You're!」

It seems this was unexpected to her as well, as her eyes had opened wide. She's the vampire girl who had fought me on at least equal terms back then. If I can believe Shiro-san's words, she should likewise be a reincarnation of a former classmate, Negishi Akiko-san, but... what's this dangerous personality that seems about to try to cast magic at me the instant we meet?

「Augh!」

Negishi-san's magic, was stopped by Shiro-san. Amazing. In an instant just now, she interfered with the magic construction, crushing it. As to what kind of skill she used to allow her to pull off such a stunt, I have no real idea. Incidentally, the reason for Negishi-san's cry was because Shiro-san drove a roundhouse kick into her side almost as an afterthought. It seems entirely unnatural, but on receiving that kick Negishi-san's body didn't so much as quiver, but instead it seems the kick simply folded into her body. Or rather, is Negishi-san alright? Her body has been bent into a <shape on the spot and

blood is gushing out of her mouth though. Bones and so on that should never be broken on a human body have been broken okay?

Shiro-san looks at Negishi-san's condition, and slowly forces her crooked body back to normal. From Negishi-san's mouth comes an unbearable scream that can't really be described. Just hearing that scream could drive you insane. However, that wound regenerated so quickly that maybe I should be impressed about that instead.

This situation has been incredible since the start, but what's going to happen next?

Translation notes:

"Demon King's fixer" - an alternative translation would be "Demon King's body double".

"Just hearing that scream could drive you insane" - a reference to the "Call of Cthulhu" RPG game which features a "SAN" (sanity) status value. A literal translation of the line would be "Just hearing that scream would wipe out your SAN value."

Blood 28 - Reunion

When goshujin-sama asked me to come visit someone with her, the location was at the mansion that goshujin-sama stays at. That part was fine. It's not like this is the first time that goshujin-sama has ordered me to do something anyway, and it's not been limited to one or two occasions when I've been asked to do something crazy.

However, I'd never have expected that at the destination of our visit, that the one waiting for us was my opponent from our death match just the other day. When I unthinkingly tried to activate my magic, I was kicked by goshujin-sama. My HP stopped just short of vanishing completely. It's a relief that today at least it didn't drop to zero. Perhaps she thought that it would be bad if the mansion was destroyed, as I was constrained by threads before I was kicked. The oni who saw this pulled away, but it's troubling since this is normal for goshujin-sama.

Then goshujin-sama personally handed that oni a book and also a full set of dougi-like clothes that looked suitable for kendo, then quickly left somewhere. On leaving she also handed me a book, so I'm sure she telling me to read it, but what else am I supposed to be doing here?

For now, I glared at the oni. Those clothes are unmistakably handmade by goshujin-sama. I have received some in the past as well, but goshujin-sama seems to like making clothes, surprisingly. From the quality of the workmanship you might wonder if they were professionally made. Well, maybe it's goshujin-sama's tastes, but they're mostly very simple and understated though. That the clothes handed to the oni, have good craftsmanship, are simple, and most of all cannot be appraised, all substantiate them being made by goshujin-sama. It's the same for goshujin-sama herself, but the clothes made from threads that goshujin-sama created cannot be appraised either.

Well, never mind the clothes. The problem is, why did she make them as a present for the oni? For goshujin-sama to actually make a present, there's been no exceptions apart from me, Merazofis and Ariel-san! Why does someone

who's just turned up from nowhere get a present!? I don't really understand why, but I'm getting irritated.

「Even if you weren't glaring so much, I still wouldn't have any hostility towards you any more though.」

The oni spoke. I was glaring because of the present of clothes that goshujin-sama gave you though, but I'll ignore that on this occasion.

「So you can speak then.」

When I was fighting him he didn't even speak once, and not only that but it was unclear if he had the ability to speak in the first place. Seemingly insane, he did nothing but radiate the urge to kill. That's why I never even considered that he could speak, but certainly the oni in front of me is completely different and has a calm attitude. His mood is so completely different that it almost makes you wonder if he's really the same person.

「That's because at that time I was under the influence of Wrath and had lost my sanity. Currently that influence of Wrath is almost gone, so I can act on my own will now.」

Wrath, that was, a skill the oni has, right? He lost his sanity due to its influence? In addition, based on those comments, then he couldn't have been acting on his own will before?

「Wrath is one of the skills that I have, and when it's activated my sanity is lost. In addition, there's no guarantee that it'll return. The compensation I paid for activating Wrath too much, was to completely lose my sanity, reducing me to an existence that would just indiscriminately kill everything that it notices. At some point along the way my consciousness returned for some reason, so I can still remember you though.」

Perhaps in response to the doubt expressed on my face, the oni gives me a proper explanation. Losing your sanity and running wild, huh. What a crazy skill.

「To actually use a skill like that, are you a fool?」

「I cannot deny it. However, I should explain that I was forced to use it though.」

「It seems implausible that a monster like you would fall into a situation where you had to rely on such a skill though.」

At my words, the oni smiled bitterly.

「Aren't we both monsters I wonder?」

How rude! Is what I would like to say, but I can't deny it though.

「Of course I wasn't always this strong. At the start I was definitely weak, and after that it was nothing but near death experiences.」

「I see. You're neither human or demon, right? Could it be, that you evolved from a monster?」

Goshujin-sama said she evolved from a spider monster into her current humanoid form, so maybe this oni was the same.

「Yeah. I was a goblin at the start.」

「Huh?」

A goblin? A goblin as in THE goblin? I didn't really look at games or manga much, but even still I at least know about goblins. A weak green monster that's as tall as a child, right?

「You're kidding aren't you?」

「It's true. I was born a goblin. That's what I meant by being weak.」

It seems he really was a goblin. In that case, having evolved from such a weak goblin, maybe this guy deserves some respect in certain ways.

「When I was weak, I had to depend upon the power of Wrath to be able to survive. If I hadn't done that, then I would have died a long ago by now I'm sure. To die, or to be engulfed by Wrath, those were the only two choices that I had.」

How courageous. I think I've had quite a courageous life myself, but in terms of going through situations where you have to make extreme choices to have a chance to survive, I've had some myself. There was a time when it seemed like I could die any day at least.

「Instead of standing around talking, how about sitting down?」

At the oni's prompting, I sit in the suggested chair.

「Since this is an opportunity where reincarnators have met, there's lots of things I'd like to talk about.」

I unconsciously uttered “Eh?” in response.

「Eh?」

Silence.

「You’re Negishi Akiko-san, right?」

How does he... wait, it has to be goshujin-sama eh.

「I see, you were a reincarnator then.」

Now that I say it, it makes sense. Both why goshujin-sama went out of her way to make us meet, and also why she sent the clothes.

「Eh?」

「Eh?」

Silence. Why does he raise his voice in doubt at that? The oni has a strange expression, perhaps he’s stumped, or perhaps he’s embarrassed.

「Ahh, so that’s it. I guess so. Many months and years have passed already, so you don’t even remember your classmates’ faces huh.」

What’s he saying, wait a minute. Now that he says it, I get the feeling that I’ve seen him somewhere before. After I reincarnated I had a completely different face so I hadn’t thought about it, but goshujin-sama has her original face though. Then, this guy as well? Now that I look closely, though he has horns and the colour of his eyes is red, he has a Japanese looking face.

「I am Sasajima Kyouya. However, I use the name Wrath here. Please treat me favourably once more.」

Sorry. Even after hearing your name I still can’t really remember you.

Translation notes:

When Sophia indirectly suggests that sometimes her HP does drop to zero, it’s probably the case that she survives with “rebirth” from her Higher Vampire skill.

“Please treat me favourably once more” - this is a common Japanese expression used as a friendly greeting, except that it’s rare for “once more” to be added. It’s a bit like saying “How do you do once more.”

Oni 12 - Awkward

This is so awkward. Since my face wasn't any different to before my reincarnation, I had been under the impression that Negishi-san knew who I was the whole time for sure. However, considering her reactions, it seems that she doesn't remember me at all. Even when I said my name she only responded in a subdued manner. It seems she then became a bit flustered and glossed over it by saying, "Sasajima-kun huh, I remember", but her face suggests that she can't remember, so it's obviously a lie. Shiro-san has a considerable poker face so I couldn't read her emotions, but Negishi-san is the type who openly shows her emotions on her face it seems.

Even so, this is embarrassing. I was under the impression that she remembered me and so on all this time, so I feel so self-conscious about it that it's really embarrassing! Though after I said it, since many years have passed, I guess it's natural not to be able to remember your classmates' faces. In my case, though I can remember Negishi-san, that's solely due to her deep presence.

Negishi Akiko-san. She had an especially uncertain existence in the class. Her appearance itself had a strong impact, but it was really her actions that left a strong impression. Negishi-san would spend most of the morning classes nodding off. Even if the class president Kudou-san warned her, all that she would get back was a glint in the eye that seemed to harbour an intent to kill. From that alone I instinctively realised that she was dangerous. She was isolated from the rest of the class as if it was natural.

That Negishi-san sure has changed. Before, when she looked at others it was only ever with a glare of hatred in her eyes, but now her expressions change frequently. With her high-handed manner of speaking as well, I somehow get the feeling that she's acting tough, and her childishness seems appropriate for her age. Because she has reincarnated, she should have a higher mental age than she looks though.

Whether that change is a good thing or not, that is not something for me to

decide. If she is okay with it herself, then that should be fine. From my point of view, she's become much easier to get along with though.

Though I think so, I still feel awkward. I have been forgotten, but we did try to kill each other just the other day though. Why did Shiro-san leave without saying anything? With the mood in this room and just the two of us, it's a high hurdle to clear.

「Humph. Could you please not call me Negishi? My name now is Sophia Keren. Please call me by that name.」

It doesn't seem like she's saying that to match me naming myself as Wrath though. I have a different reason why I don't like to be called by my old name. She probably hated herself in her previous life. That's because, it's clear from the behaviour that she showed that she found everything around her in her previous life to be seemingly odious.

「I understand. Then, I shall call you Sophia-san from now on.」

I don't have any reason not to. I can't deny something I ask for myself anyway.

「So, what did Shiro-san want us to do?」

I'll ask that to change the subject. If we continue to talk about the subject of our names, I think that we'll both recall bitter memories after all.

「I don't know.」

「Eh?」

However, I didn't expect that answer.

「I don't know. I wasn't told anything.」

「Umm.」

You came here without being told anything? Ahh, now that you mention it, if she'd been told something, she wouldn't have tried to attack me as soon as we met I guess.

「So, it was really just for us to meet?」

「I wouldn't think so. Shouldn't there be something written in this book?」

Sophia-san holds up a book. I look down at the book that Shiro-san also

handed to me.

Shiro-san handed me a book and some clothes. The clothes were, a dougi and hakama, some Japanese socks, and this cloth that I'd rather not think about, but maybe it's a loincloth? No matter how I look at them it appears to be a complete set of samurai clothes or similar, so is she telling me to wear these then? I was pretty much raised as a modern person, so I'm reluctant to wear these clothes that make me feel like a cosplayer though. Well, considering that when I had Wrath activated I was pretty much only in underwear, then this is much better though. Let's put the clothes on hold until later.

So, with regards to the book, there's nothing written on the front cover. It's not that thick, so it's more like a notebook. When I start leafing through it, there's something hand written.

『Shiro-chan's basic skills course』

That title is written in excessively cute rounded handwriting. In addition, it's illustrated with what appears to be a cartoonish spider character jumping for joy or something.

「What, is this?」

「Who knows? Maybe she wrote it after getting drunk or something?」

What's that supposed to mean? My mental image of Shiro-san just collapsed. Alcohol? She drinks it?

「When goshujin-sama drinks alcohol her personality changes. It's better to regard goshujin-sama as a different person when she's drunk.」

I see. HM!?

「Goshujin-sama?」

Somehow, I just can't allow that word to pass without comment. What, "goshujin-sama"! That's your relationship!?

「Excuse me, could you please not imagine something strange? Goshujin-sama and I aren't in a strange relationship okay!」

「No, no! What's with the "goshujin-sama"! That term of address itself is strange, surely!？」

「There's no way that I'm calling her that because I want to! I'm under a curse!」

「Curse?」

「Indeed. A curse where I cannot call goshujin-sama anything other than goshujin-sama.」

What an insane curse!

「For what reason was such a curse placed on you then...?」

「Who knows? It's an offense she committed while drunk after all.」

「Isn't there some way to undo it?」

「It seems it's not possible. It's actually such a strong curse that in fact maybe I should be grateful that it ended up no worse than a silly prank.」

I've just seen a cruel curse being squandered. Or rather, my mental image of Shiro-san who would invoke such a curse is steadily collapsing inside of me though.

「Anyway, let's read our books. There doesn't appear to be a lot of content, so we should be able to read it quickly I'm sure.」

I guess she doesn't want to talk about the curse any further, as Sophia-san forcibly changes the topic. Then, she immediately opened the book and took a posture of reading it. Seeing her end the conversation so unilaterally, I'm simply shocked. Well, I can understand that our relationship is strained after the death match, but even while I understand I'm still depressed. Maybe I'm starving for conversation more than I had realised. With a fellow reincarnator, maybe I was hoping for someone to talk with on a similar level or something. While thinking that, I turn my attention to the book as well.

Translation notes:

Calling someone “goshujin-sama” in an everyday modern Japanese setting would be very unusual. Since Shiro got the idea from how D's servants behaved, that gives a rough indication of how unusual it is - very few people are servants, have servants or meet servants.

A small note on speech patterns: Sophia has quite feminine speech - image a good middle-class girl or similar. It's a level or so below “ojou-sama” style speech. Wrath on the other hand comes across as more self-conscious and thoughtful, rather than overly masculine or confident.

Blood 29 - Bafflement

This is bad, really bad. How did you have a conversation with people again? Argh, I don't know. It's rare for goshujin-sama to actually talk in the first place, and when she's drunk it's like she doesn't even hear what I'm saying and just unilaterally monologues. Without using hypnotism, it's been so long since I've actually had a normal sane conversation that I've forgotten how.

Still, it's good that I had mentally prepared in advance to use a haughty tone that doesn't appear condescending, but, is this working? He's not thinking I'm being strange, right? It seems like I might have been able to fool him that I'd forgotten his name, or rather, his entire existence.

While pretending to be reading the book, I glance up at the oni, Wrath. He's reading with a serious expression, so it seems that he's not worried about my situation. If that's the case, then I'm angry that he's acting like I don't even exist. Though it's good that I voluntarily proposed to read the book because it was hard to continue the conversation, it's awkward for this silence to continue like this.

Besides, what's with this book? This is goshujin-sama we're talking about, so she probably wrote the book because she hates to talk, but comparing the effort involved to make the book and the effort involved to talk, it should be more difficult to make the book though. If you're going to intervene then we could both be a bit more taciturn though. When it's one-to-one isn't it unnatural to not answer something that must be heard no matter what?

Complaining to someone who isn't here will get you nowhere though. I'll read the book for now. Let's see, Shiro-chan's basic skills course? I should praise you for this amazing ability to kill any enthusiasm to read any further at the very first page. As I've come to expect from goshujin-sama, in terms of being able to make me irritated she's the best in the world indeed. What's this, aiming to play up your cuteness when you normally don't even have the slightest bit of civility? Are you messing around?

Ahh, not good, not good. I should read it properly.

『A skill is the transformation of part of the soul, in order to easily draw out the power of the soul that all living things possess.』

Huh?

『Therefore, a skill is equivalent to being a part of the soul, and the more skills you gain the greater the amount of the soul becomes usable. By itself the soul has a natural limit, which leads to a limit on the number of skills that can be retained as well, but in order to forcibly mature the soul beyond those limits, there exists in this world the System that increases the number of skills.』

Erm. There should be immensely important things written here, yet as emphasis next to every letter is a little motif of a spider that's wildly dancing or something, so I can't concentrate on the words.

『However, in contrast to these normal skills that only transform no more than the surface region of the soul, there exist some special skills that transform the inner region of the soul. These are the Seven Deadly Sins skills and the Seven Virtues skills. Commonly called the Ruler skills.』

The Seven Deadly Sins. My Envy is also one of those, right? The Wrath skill that Wrath has too. It's a bit late, but I guess I shouldn't mock his naming sense for calling himself Wrath, should I?

『Because the Ruler skills transform the inner region of the soul, a comparison can be made to the effects that other skills have on the owner. One, the effects of the skill itself are powerful. Two, each skill also has an impact on the owner's personality. Three, the more it is used the more the soul is eroded. Therefore, unless usage of the Ruler skills is avoided, then before long the personality will be completely taken over.』

Wait a second. I've not heard this important information before. If it's used, your personality will be taken over!?

「That skill erodes your soul, just like that oni, don't use it if you don't want to lose sight of yourself」

I recall the words said by the man in black when he barged into my fight with Wrath. Then, this is what he was referring to? In that case, Wrath had his soul taken over by Wrath? Or perhaps, he was holding out on the brink of being

taken over?

This time I take a good look at Wrath. He's still seriously reading the book as before, and not paying any notice of me. That indicates just how important the contents of the book are to Wrath. In other words, it's because he's experienced it himself huh.

It's not somebody else's problem for me either. Because I have the skill of Envy after all. So this is what goshujin-sama meant when she said not to use this skill. I've always thought this, but your words are way too brief! If you'd explained things properly then I wouldn't have used it.

『There's four possible countermeasures. One, don't acquire a Ruler skill in the first place. Two, abstain from using the skill. Three, tough it out with guts. Four, put effort into the Heresy Resistance skill, and acquire Heresy Nullity.』

The third one is ridiculous so I'll ignore it. Finally, I've understood the reason why Wrath and I were made to meet this time.

『Heresy Resistance counteracts against negative effects that would directly interfere with the soul. With Heresy Nullity, the power of attacks from within the System can be almost nullified. That applies equally to the Ruler skills. To be able to freely exercise Ruler skills while keeping the negative influences to a minimum, this method is the most suitable.』

In short, she's telling both Wrath and I to raise our Heresy Resistance together. Hmm. The book does continue, but the rest can be left to later.

「Do you have a moment?」

「What?」

This guy, he's not even raising his face despite me calling out to him - you've got some nerve.

《Proficiency requirements met. You have gained the skill [Dignity LV1]》

I acquired some kind of skill it seems, but I'll look at it later.

「Do you possess Heresy Magic?」

「I do.」

「I see. Then, shoot the weakest one at me.」

「Huh?」

Wrath finally raised his face.

「Oh? Could it be that you cannot understand the book?」

I'll go with some slightly disparaging words. As if he really doesn't understand, Wrath makes a puzzled expression. This sense of superiority sure is nice. I'm the one who understands what goshujin-sama wants to say. Naturally, I've not been together with her since a baby for nothing. There's still many things about her that are impossible to understand though.

「In short, to suppress the effects of the Ruler skill, Heresy Nullity must be acquired. I'm telling you to strike me with Heresy Magic in order to acquire it.」

This time Wrath makes an understanding expression but it looks like there's something he doesn't understand still.

Translation notes:

The quote from Kuro is from “Oni VS Oni ⑥”

Oni 13 - Resistance

The book that Shiro-san handed to me, contains information that I had wanted know. The method to suppress Wrath. However, Sophia-san's reaction on seeing that was unexpected. In order to acquire Heresy Resistance, blast Heresy Magic at her? It's like ordering someone to hit you in order to become strong at taking a hit. It certainly might be effective, but why are you taking the initiative to use the most painful method already, when there might be other methods. I have trouble understanding her. In addition, she's declaring that with a self-satisfied look for some reason, so it's even more incomprehensible.

There's many methods available to raise a resistance. Firstly, as Sophia-san is currently attempting to put into practice, is to receive an attack with that attribute. This method has the greatest potential for earning proficiency. However, being able to acquire the resistance, means that an equivalent amount of that attribute's damage must be received as well. If you want to become stronger against fire then you have to let your body get burnt by fire. To put it bluntly, it's torture. If you intend to proceed with that, you either need to be in a situation where you absolutely have to acquire that resistance as a last resort, or you're an idiot, or perhaps you possess special inclinations where that option brings feelings of pleasure. Please don't tell me it's that, okay?

The safest method, is to acquire magic or attack skills with the same attribute, and then develop them. For resistances, if you possess the corresponding attribute attack skills, then the proficiency will naturally be increased. The reason why I have high resistances in fire and lightning, is because that has had a significant influence. The timing with which the proficiency increases, is when the corresponding attack skill's level rises, or when your own level rises. It seems that the proficiency obtained during everyday living is miniscule, but I still think that the proficiency is mainly earned in connection with your level.

The final method, is to assign skill points and then raise the proficiency. Skill points aren't just for acquiring new skills, and by investing points into skills that were previously gained, it is possible to increase the proficiency. I might have

used up all all my previous skill points, but it's possible to safely and securely earn the proficiency.

Apart from those methods, the rest depend on quite unusual methods. For example, to evolve into a race that has the corresponding resistance at a high level. The Ice Dragon that I have fought previously had Nullity level ice resistance for example. However, this method depends on being able to evolve in the first place, so you might as well choose a humanoid species. I might have possibly had the potential through the course of evolution, but for humans and demons it's basically impossible for them to evolve in the first place. I wonder if vampires can evolve? Even if they can, I don't know if an evolutionary race with the resistance exists.

However, with regards to the current situation, Shiro-san has already given us an answer.

「Have you read the book to the end?」

「Eh?」

「This bit. Look.」

『The quickest method to acquire Heresy Nullity is to acquire the Patience skill. Patience is also one of the Seven Virtues skills, but it is the exception in that it has no negative influences on the soul. Not only that, on top of obtaining a certain amount of resistance, you can acquire Heresy Nullity via the title.』

「See?」

At the point where I indicate, that explanation appears. If I can acquire that skill, I can automatically obtain Heresy Nullity.

Sophia-san's face freezes, still with her self-satisfied look. With her expression staying the same, her face turns bright red. She's embarrassed. It's so obvious.

「Of course I've read it! However, the Patience skill is one the Ruler skills, right? At any one moment only one person in the world can acquire a Ruler skill, so why don't you notice my generosity in conceding it to you I wonder? I'm telling you to help me raise my resistance because I'll concede Patience to you!」

Sophia-san is talking without pause with her face bright red. It seems she's

somehow desperately trying to hide her own error with deception. She'd be rather pitiful if I pointed this out, so I guess I'll go with her suggestion.

「I see. Sorry, that was insensitive of me. In that case, I shall presume upon your kindness, Sophia-san.」

Actually, this would help me immensely. I'm currently able to hold back Wrath, but I don't know when I'll lose my sanity next and go berserk. I strongly feel that I should acquire Heresy Nullity as soon as possible.

「Indeed. My kindness is deeper than the oceans, so acquire Patience while feeling grateful to me.」

Maybe she thinks she's gotten away with her deception, as she gives a clear sigh of relief while carrying on with her condescending attitude. Somehow, this stinks of disappointment. I guess this is what they call a "disappointing beauty" huh. She's become an eccentric in a different way to her previous life it seems.

「You're not thinking something rude are you?」
「Of course not. When I realised that I might be liberated from the anguish of Wrath after so many years, I was rather deeply moved you see.」

That was a close shave. Maybe it's her instincts as a warrior, but she's strangely astute.

However, though I said that as an excuse on the spur of the moment, I really am deeply moved in fact. Half my life in this world has been hell. Until I fought Sophia-san, it was even enough that I thought I wanted to die. However, during my battle with Sophia-san, the instant that I perceived that I really could die, I became aware that my own feelings were wavering. Then, when I was being completely beaten up by that god called Kuro, I clearly felt terror. That I was going to be killed. Because of that, I realised my reluctance to being killed. Compared to my previous wish to die, that's truly unexpected. At the end of the day, I didn't really want to die.

How despicable. While killing so many others, when I myself faced being killed, I hoped that I wouldn't die. If they saw me looking apathetic like this, I'm sure all the goblins would laugh at me. When they fought, if they took a life, they thought it was natural to be resolved to die one day themselves. I didn't have that resolve. Instead, I only used the power of Wrath to persecute the

weak, and didn't have the least resolve to pick a fight with my life on the line.

When I safely came to my senses again, I actually felt relief. That I was alive. I was also happy. I'm the worst. After doing all that I did, to think that I alone can survive in peace. I should die. Yet, I'm afraid to die.

I think I'm pathetic. However, I don't have the courage to take my own life. As atonement, I think that I have to properly make use of my remaining life. However, even if I was told to die, I don't think I'm capable of that. In my previous life I thought that it's okay for the likes of criminals to die, but I never expected that feeling to be aimed at myself. Even while thinking that it would be better for me to die, I'm wavering about whether to die. I'm falling into self-hatred.

To be honest, I'm still not sure how I should live from now on, but in order not to commit more crimes, there's no way that I can allow myself to be engulfed by Wrath. That's why, I need Heresy Nullity.

However, there's one big problem.

「I'm glad that you'll concede it to me, but I have zero skill points.」
「Ah.」

The mood is cramped. Sophia-san awkwardly glanced away from me.

Translation notes:

“Disappointing beauty” - this is in the same sense that Ariel is now considered to be a “disappointing Demon King”.

Blood 30 - Disquiet

Argh, really! Why is this going so badly!? Everything that I've said recently has ended up backfiring on me!

「There's more or less some methods other than gaining Patience written here, but it seems that they're not recommended.」

While I'm feeling impatience and irritation, Wrath says that leisurely. Why you, who's fault do you think it is that I'm feeling this way! Argh, I'm so irritated.

Calm down, me. I am a proud vampire. I cannot be shaken by something this trivial. For now, in order to help me compose my feelings, I'll try reading this method that Wrath is talking about.

『Acquire the skill of Detection, then by merely activating the skill it is possible to significantly improve the proficiency of Heresy Resistance. However, in this case, until Heresy Resistance is raised to Heresy Nullity you must be careful not to use magic at all. In the worst case you may die so this method is frankly not recommended.』

「That's a fail.」

Wrath makes a questioning expression, but this is definitely a fail. After all, that goshujin-sama is saying you might die okay? THAT goshujin-sama! Even THAT irregular super-being is actually saying it's a method where you might die, so it's obviously not normal. If it's at the level where that goshujin-sama is saying that you might die in the worst case, then if normal people tried that method then out of 100 attempts 99 would die for sure. I'm certain.

「Certainly, it would be inconvenient to be unable to use magic.」

「That's not where the problem lies.」

I don't know why you would be unable use magic, but compared to the possibility of death it means bugger all. Oh my? As a lady I shouldn't use the phrase "bugger all" now should I? It sounds pretty stupid anyway, without a fragment of dignity. I shall refrain from speaking this expression from now on.

「The part where it says you may die?」

「If goshujin-sama concludes it with saying that you may die, then that's from the reference of goshujin-sama herself. For us regular types, I can see a future where trying the same method would result in instant death.」

Indeed, I experienced those crazy actions more than enough to hate it during my training period with goshujin-sama. If Ariel-san hadn't stopped me, I don't know how many times I would have died. Goshujin-sama lacks the perspective of ordinary people. After all she'd be like "it's normally possible right?" while almost killing me.

「I, I see. Then, let's ignore this method.」

「That's wise.」

I flick ahead through the book once again to check it out, but there's nothing further written on earning proficiency in Heresy Resistance. In that case, the best way is to earn proficiency is to receive Heresy Magic attacks after all. Really, I wish goshujin-sama hadn't written those unnecessary things.

「If Patience is no good, and Detection is also no good, then we'll just have to use Heresy Magic after all huh.」

At my words, Wrath makes a really disagreeable looking face. Well, I don't like it either, but if we want to obtain the resistance, we have no choice but to press ahead with this then. Besides, unfortunately for you I have Pain Nullity and Sense of Pain Nullity. No matter what attack it might be, if I can't feel it then it's no big deal.

「Shouldn't you do this as well? I'll acquire Heresy Magic, so let's trade blows with magic.」

I select Heresy Magic from the list and acquire it. I still have plenty of skill points anyway, so I'm sure it's okay to acquire it. If it's just to raise Wrath's Heresy Resistance, then I could just use Charm on him, but if we're unlucky he might get affected by the technique itself.

Incidentally, I checked whether it's possible or not to also acquire Patience, but it seems that I don't have enough skill points. I tried checking the other Ruler skills as well, but the only one I could acquire was Lust. In the case of Lust, even then I would have to use the majority of my remaining skill points to

acquire it. To be honest, I'm not at all interested in acquiring that. Considering the risk and cost, the return is too small.

「Okay, let's begin.」

「We're really doing this?」

「Why are you asking something so obvious?」

At my words, Wrath breathes a big sigh.

After that, we both start to silently trade blows with Heresy Magic. The reason why we're silent is because we don't have the spare capacity to talk. To be honest, I made light of it. What we're using right now is, Heresy Magic level 1 - Disquiet. As the name suggests, it's magic that makes the opponent feel disquieted.

The effect is so plain that I've never used it, but this, sure is nasty magic. An unbearable feeling of disquiet assails you, like you can constantly hear nails screeching across a blackboard. In addition, both Pain Nullity and Sense of Pain Nullity have absolutely no effect.

When I look at Wrath's appearance, I see that his face is pale and he has goose bumps. My condition has definitely become something similar. If asked I'd say it's unclear how useful this magic would be in combat, but if it was used then it might be able to dampen their fighting spirit. It's a plain but unpleasant magic. Perfectly suitable for harassment huh.

「Has your resistance increased?」

「Not yet.」

「Mine has increased to Greater Heresy Resistance level 1.」

「I see, congratulations.」

Wrath begins a brief exchange. We continue in silence after that.

What's with this punishment game? In a different sense this is as agonising as when I was beaten up by goshujin-sama. In the first place what's with this situation where a man and woman are in the same room silently staring at each other with pallid faces?

Also, maybe because it's a level 1 magic spell, or maybe because Wrath is weakening, but my resistance is slow to rise anyway. I had Greater Heresy

Resistance level 6 at the start, which is pretty high, so maybe that's another reason.

Currently, Wrath's status is falling as he weakens. When I looked with appraisal his maximum values haven't decreased, so I think he'll recover sooner or later. It seems he was done in by that guy called Kuro. Something about it being necessary to cancel the activation of Wrath.

However, even with his weakening body I'm still feeling this disquieted, so maybe if he was in a normal condition wouldn't this amount of disquiet be likely to cause madness? If I consider it that way, maybe I should be glad that he's weakening perhaps? I don't have any confidence that I could endure any more of this sense of disquiet.

Oh my? In my case, I'm not particularly weakening am I? So that means I'm using my magic normally then?

「S, sorry. I'm at my limit...」

Wrath collapses to the ground, bringing an end to the forced proficiency gains for the day.

Translation notes:

“Bugger all” - the literal meaning of the Japanese phrase would be something like “not even worth a fart”. On a side note, Sophia seems to be forcing herself to use a speech style that's slightly closer to the image of a “proud vampire” - using slightly posher language and talking down to Wrath.

Regarding the title and the translation of the level 1 Heresy Magic spell. It essentially means “unpleasant”, “uncomfortable”, “dreadful”, “unspeakable” *etc.* It first turns up in chapter 50 of the main story. It's also been translated as “Disturb” but I think “Disquiet” sounds more like the name of a spell.

In “Blood 26”, Wrath had Heresy Resistance level 9, and in “Oni vs Oni ①”, Sophia had Greater Heresy Resistance level 6. We don't know how many skill points Sophia has despite Shiro's frugal training methods but “Blood 25” suggests that Shiro would simply order Sophia to gain skills or status during the 8 years so maybe she used up skill points for that. On a final note, it's not been explicitly stated but I presume that only available Ruler skills are listed with

appraisal and that Ruler skills that are currently taken do not show up.

Chapter 257 - Writing Is Wonderful

If I can't talk then why don't I just convey it with writing! I'm such a genius. If I just convey what I want to say in a book beforehand, then I don't need to have any unnecessary conversations. After I do that then I just have to get the other party to read the book of their own accord. In addition, while they're reading the book, I don't even have to be nearby anyway.

I quickly got engrossed in writing books. Now I can even attack the ones I've been hesitant to get in contact with previously! Yahoo!

First is imouto-chan. From now on I'll arrange it so that imouto-chan will secretly support Natsume-kun's actions. Well, I don't intend for her to get too involved though. Ultimately I will consider myself lucky if imouto-chan is able to gain a Ruler skill. I better not view imouto-chan as a pawn. I dunno when her love for her brother might run wild and she'll betray me after all.

Therefore, I will hand over some simple written instructions that's more like a memo.

「What is this?」

「Read.」

I simply say that and depart quickly. If I carelessly allow the conversation to continue she'll start blabbering on about her onii-sama. Once that happens it'll take at least about an hour before I can free myself. An hour of horror. I don't have time for that.

While I'm at it, I go take a peek on Natsume-kun's condition.

...Let's pretend I didn't see that. Would even a drug addict get that bad? Is this really okay? Hmm. Well, if he's able to get a Ruler skill, I'll then just dispose of him at an appropriate point. Please wait in anticipation of Natsume-kun's actions next time.

Now then, next is Argnar. Shutting the elves out from the demon territory is now almost entirely successful. The dangerous elements amongst the demons have been completely eliminated across the board. To be honest there's not

much left for Argnar to do. I guess I can just have him make preparations for war. At the rate things are going, it seems that I'll be able to pull the humans into a large scale war in a few more years.

When the war is over, next will be to go destroy the elf village. I have decided this. However, Potimas is obviously not going to drop dead that easily. Based on the intelligence from my clones inside the barrier, I know the internal conditions of the elf village well enough, but there's a critical place I've not been able to infiltrate. Namely, the place where Potimas's real body is. It's not so much about the infiltration itself, but that I've still been unable to determine where it might be. It sure seems like he's been hidden carefully. After all, even after all this time, he's been able to elude both Kuro and the Demon King and is still alive. Well, in Kuro's case I'm sure that he's simply been hesitating about whether to destroy Potimas or not though.

Once I locate Potimas's real body, I'll get rid of him. The preparations for that will probably be completed after the war has ended. Well, there's no need to hurry. I can just slowly build up the siege.

In order to get another side to participate in that siege, I gotta go call out to them then. I've been putting it off until now, but I'll have to make contact sooner or later. He's probably the most abstruse person I'll face apart from Potimas, so I gotta be prudent.

I'm about to get in contact with the pope of the Divine Word Religion. He's also the Ruler of Temperance. To be able to destroy the System I need the Ruler authorities and he is one of the people who possess that.

Based on the intelligence gathering of my clones, I have good idea of what objectives the pope is working towards. It's probably similar to Argnar's. Like how Argnar wants the demons to survive no matter what, the pope wants the humans to survive no matter what. However, unlike Argnar, the pope is a Ruler. In addition, if the Demon King is correct, he's also maxed Taboo. He's maxed Taboo, yet he still wants the humans to survive. That's not possible with an ordinary resolve. Depending on the situation, he's capable of being a much more troublesome enemy than Potimas.

I'm writing a book. It's become quite lengthy. The contents are, the current

state of the world, regarding the reincarnators, the forthcoming movements of the demons, my efforts to bring about the destruction of the elves and a request to join in that.

I'm sure the pope already understands about the current state of the world. Otherwise, I don't see why he would have initiated a war with the Goddess religion. Over the ages, no matter the world, it's always the case that religious wars become a mess. There's not many people who would ever go through religious conversion anyway, and no matter how much they struggle bad feelings still remain. Particularly in this case, since though the Divine Word Religion and the Goddess Religion have different dogmas, they revere the same god. There's no way the pope doesn't know that. On top of shouldering all sorts of risks, to still pursue a plan of reducing the power of the Goddess Religion at this time, is a decision that he must have reached precisely because he has a clear understanding of the current status of the world.

In the case of the reincarnators as well, I think he has has a certain degree of comprehension. At any rate, the pope is commandeering the reincarnators after all. He's sure to have spoken to them. As a small supplementary addition to the contents, I guess I'll add notes on why the reincarnators ended up reincarnating and anecdotes on the Hero and Demon King from the previous generation. I'll avoid touching upon D. It's better that way. Knowing about that could cause a disaster. After all, she's seriously an evil god. Imagine if such a god decided to seize the lifeline of this world, eh? That pope, would probably get holes in his stomach from stress I guess?

What I wrote about the forthcoming movements of the demons, it's pretty much half guesswork. I want to make sure of how the pope interprets and reacts to that. If he abuses that information to attempt to obstruct me, then I'll have to show no mercy unfortunately. To be blunt though, no matter how the pope reacts, it won't have any affect on the war. The Demon King's strength surpasses anything in this world. Even the cheat enabled reincarnators, are no match for the Demon King. Just by herself the Demon King could destroy half the world. Obviously so long as there's no intervention from either Kuro or myself. Against that Demon King, whatever the pope decides won't actually amount to much at all. Either way, the outcome won't change.

Yes, the outcome won't change. Whether he opposes avoiding the war, or whether he assists with annihilating the elves, there'll be no change in the end result for the pope. For my final objective, I need the Ruler authorities. And the pope will probably not accept that. That being the case, I'll have no choice but to kill him and steal it from him.

I teleport and appear right in front of the pope. Just when he appears to be in discussion with Kusama-kun, one of the reincarnators.

「Who might you be?」

「Wakaba-san!?!」

The pope is unshaken, but still poses his question cautiously. Kusama-kun is clearly shaken and his voice quavers. There's sure a gap between them in dignity.

「Here.」

I leave the book I wrote there. And then I teleport away. What happens next is up to the pope. Now then, I wonder how it'll turn out?

The Pope's Deliberations

What a turn of events. A mysterious girl abruptly appears, leaving a single book. Looking at Sajin's reaction, it's likely that she was a reincarnator.

「Sajin, call I8.」

I so inform Sajin, who is still staring in a daze at the place where the girl vanished. Sajin gave a start and comes to his senses, then immediately went about his duty. Sajin's figure disappears on the spot. No matter how many times I see it it still looks like Space Magic teleportation, but in practice it appears to be one of the abilities from the special ninja skill that Sajin possess. Unfortunately it appears that he himself doesn't even understand the principle behind it, so it doesn't seem possible to reproduce the effect of the special skill. If was possible I would have every member of the church's Kinma Unit learn it.

I8, who I had Sajin call, is from the established Kinma Unit, which is a unit that deals with the discovery and elimination of those with the Taboo skill and demons hidden within human society. The Taboo skill that almost never occurs has never reached level 10, but it is not like it could never happen either. While the possibility exists, it is a good idea to nip it in the bud sooner rather than later. Therefore, the church has strictly punished those with Taboo since long ago. Also, because demons look no different from humans in outward appearance at all, there are times when they creep into human society for reasons such as defection or spying. Discovering such elements is one of the important functions of the Kinma Unit.

For the Kinma Unit to achieve that, it is necessary to have a high level in the Appraisal skill. I8, who I had Sajin call, also has the Appraisal skill. I have called I8 to apprise the book that the mysterious girl has left, in order to determine whether there is no danger.

Until I8 arrives, I gather my thoughts. Firstly, who is that girl? At present what can be understood is that Sajin knows that girl somehow, which can only be explained by her being a reincarnator. But, there is one thing that cannot be explained by that. That is the fact that Sajin instantly recognised that the girl

was a reincarnator. Sajin does not have the Appraisal skill. He should not have an Appraisal Stone either. If that is so, then how did Sajin recognise that the girl was a reincarnator?

Does he know her from a previous meeting in this world? No. There is always a watch placed on Sajin. If he ever made any questionable movements then it is unlikely that it was not conveyed to me. As far as I am aware, there should not have been any opportunity for him to have had a clandestine meeting. However, there are many mysteries about the ninja skill. The full details have not been revealed by Appraisal, so it's possible that there's some hidden ability that has not been covered by Sajin's personal statements. If that is so, then the possibility exists that he has sneaked away without my knowledge.

However, based on Sajin's reaction, that does not appear to be the case. That appeared to be genuine astonishment. Sajin is not skillful enough in acting to be able to fool me. Although there is a shapeshifting ability within the ninja skill, it has not been successfully tested after all. If Sajin had a bit more acting ability, then he would be able to expand his range of activities. It's regrettable. In the first place, Sajin is lacking in discretion. I keep him at hand because I find the ninja skill to be just that fascinating, but he hasn't even been able to master that skill. Ugio, who has been sent into the elf village, is much more competent. Just how many times have I wondered if I made a mistake in which personnel I have kept at hand?

Dammit, not good. I've allowed my thoughts to stray again.

If I make the assumption that Sajin was unaware of that girl's circumstances until now, then there is much less to consider. This is just a possibility but, in that girl's previous existence, in the world where Sajin was known as Kusama Shinobu, maybe even now she has the same appearance she had then? If that is so, then I could accept why Sajin was able to tell that the girl was a reincarnator instantly.

However, that's where the problem lies. I don't believe that the girl has the same appearance in both this world and the previous one. Sajin, Ugio and Yurin all have a difference appearance in this world. From what Ugio has reported, that is the same for the other reincarnators confined in the elf village. I can't believe that the girl is an exception. If that's the case, then that means that the

girl deliberately disguised herself to have the same appearance as in her previous existence before arriving here. What is the reason for that?

Though I have several ideas, the highest probability is indeed that it's because that she knew that Sajin was here, to put it briefly. Sajin's existence is an absolute secret even within the church. There is only a tiny handful of people who I trust with that knowledge. Has intelligence leaked out from them? Alternatively, it's also possible that Sajin himself has leaked it. Yet again, like with Sajin's ninja skill, it may be through the means of some unknown skill. If that's the case then it's not due to a traitor and I can relax.

No, I cannot relax. After all, this means nothing other than the fact that information has been leaked out from here. In the first place, I had not seen any indication of that girl using a disguise. That's how perfect a disguise it was. It could be thought of as some strange skill that I'm not aware of. Similarly to Sajin, as a reincarnator she should have a unique skill. Perhaps one of the effects is related to disguises?

In the first place, what is that girl's objective? That should be within that book, but until it is appraised it is too dangerous to touch. Even while there is a small chance of a trap, I must proceed with caution. Until I8 arrives there is nothing I can do. I also want to hear the full story from Sajin, but I sent him to call I8. What a blunder.

「Pope-sama, I8 has arrived.」

「Enter.」

Just in time, I8 has come. The man who enters through the doorway, is hiding his face with a white cloth that has an eye drawn on it. The church's Kinma Unit is perhaps better thought of as a dark ops unit. Because they often incite the enmity of others, and also so as to keep their background hidden, they hide their faces and go by a codename. Even from those within the church. The only ones allowed to know are their colleagues within the same Kinma Unit. Even among those colleagues, there is a strong implication that they are all monitoring each other. I8, and Sajin who went to fetch him, step forwards into the middle of the room.

「I know this is sudden, but please appraise this book.」

「Certainly.」

I8 stares at the book over the face cloth. However, there's no reaction. Always before he had reported the results to me immediately, but he continues to stare at the book without moving.

「What's the matter?」

「It is impossible to appraise.」

「What?」

「This book only returns the result that it's impossible to appraise.」

Impossible to appraise? I've never even heard of such a thing, no wait, there is one. The $N \% I = W$ skill. Even when attempting to appraise the contents of that skill, I heard that it's only indicated as impossible to appraise.

However, what does this mean? The contents of $N \% I = W$ is concealed by the will of a high ranking administrator. It is thought to be both a measure to provide favourable treatment towards the reincarnators, and also to protect the reincarnators. Therefore it is impossible to appraise.

Due to the fact that this book is impossible to appraise, then it means that it is something from outside the laws of nature of this world. Or otherwise, that it is a relic from prior to the activation of the System.

This... may be far more explosive than I had thought.

Translation notes:

“Kinma Unit” - since it's hard to satisfactorily translate I left it like that. The “Kin” of kinma is derived from the word for “taboo” and the “ma” is derived from the word for “demon”. It's like an abbreviation for “anti taboo and demon unit”. From their manner of speaking and how it's described, it's pretty similar to a hard core ninja unit in style.

The Pope's Torment

「I8, read it.」

My conclusion I reached in the end, was to have I8 inspect the contents. In the case that there is some harmful trap activated by reading it, then it can simply be settled by sacrificing I8. Noticing my expectations, I8 also froze for a moment, then silently picked up the book and began to review the contents. Due to the cloth with symbol of an eye that represents the Kinma Unit, I cannot see his expression but I'm sure that man is prepared to face the worst. For the members of the Kinma Unit, they must be prepared to accept death at any time.

「Sajin, please tell me what you know about that girl.」

Until I8 has finished reading the book, I must ask Sajin about that girl.

「Sure. She's Wakaba Hiroy-san. She was my classmate in my previous life. And on top of that she's the most beautiful girl in the school!」

From Sajin's words I gained an unexpected sense of unease. What is bothering me? Beautiful girl? Because Sajin called that girl a beautiful girl? Strange. From my perception, I did not think she had any particularly outstanding features.

After considering that far, I shuddered. Because I couldn't clearly recall that girl's face.

「Sajin, were you able to see that girl's face clearly?」

「Huh? Why are you asking something so obvious? Finally gone senile?」

What is the meaning of this? Even if I try to dig into my memory, the only thing I can remember about that girl is whiteness. Even though I have the Record skill.

Then, does this mean that my perception was obstructed in some manner? However, for what reason? In addition, why was Sajin not affected? Was some technique used so that only particular people are affected? Alternatively, is it

because that Sajin knew that girl originally and the technique did not affect him? Either way, I don't understand the significance. Does this mean that if Sajin had also been affected by the perception obstruction, then he wouldn't have been able to realise she was a reincarnator? In that case, what should I do? Alternatively, should I attempt to break through the perception obstruction? I don't know. In the end my thoughts are no better than conjecture. It seems I won't be able to determine that girl's intentions. All I know is that her concealment ability is so formidable that I couldn't even realise that such a technique was being employed. Putting aside the matter of her disguising herself as her previous existence, I guess it's possible that her special skill relates to an ability with illusions.

「Wakaba-san is a flawlessly beautiful girl to the extent of being the personification of a “cool beauty”, like, so much so that you'd think she'd popped out from the world of manga or something, you see. Her appearance is like what you'd expect of a celebrity right? It seems that she wore glasses because she herself didn't want to stand out, but even then that couldn't conceal her beauty you know. Those glasses were definitely just for show. Her figure is crazy awesome too. Totally showcases what the “Golden Ratio” really means, yeah. Also, her hair! Super smooth, long straight hair! Like you could see an angel's halo about, or rather she is an angel for real! Her black hair was great, but Wakaba-san's pure white hair just then was also real ni-i-ce. She felt unreal before, but that glittering white hair was totally fantasy-like, divine basically. Wow, just totally wow.」

What's up with this guy?

「Are you in love with her?」

「No way man! This sentiment is nothing so lowly! This is what you call worship!」

Even as a joke, you're at the very center of the greatest religion of this world, and you're speaking of worshiping an ordinary person and not god? I must surely have made a mistake in his training in some way.

「I see. That's enough about her appearance. What about the crucial aspects of her character?」

「Dunno.」

For an instant I was unable to grasp what he meant, and it seemed like my considerations were vanishing into thin air. You don't know? To say that you don't know after all that blather, what is going on?

「Her mysteriousness is also part of Wakaba-san's appeal!」

「Fool. That doesn't explain anything.」

「Because Wakaba-san didn't involve herself with others. Taciturn and expressionless. No clue as to what she was thinking about. We could only look at her from afar, that's just how enigmatic a beautiful girl she was. That alone was enough to satisfy us, you see.」

It seems Sajin has the expression of having gained some kind of enlightenment. It seems that after all, that I might have erred with my personnel selection. I now feel that it might be better to recall Yurin from the academy in the Anareich Kingdom and have her be trained for dark ops.

「Your Holiness, I have finished reading.」

While I am feeling disgust towards Sajin's foolishness, I8 raises his voice.

「Hrm. There's no change in your condition?」

「Correct. Based on my use of Appraisal, I am not afflicted by any strangeness in my status. So long as there's no delayed reaction, I don't believe there is any direct harm」

「Based on those remarks, it sounds like there could be indirect harm though?」

「The contents, are incredibly unique. Possibly harmful.」

I8 gives an evasive reply. Hrm? That reaction was unexpected. I8 is an excellent man even amongst the dark ops. For whether the contents are dangerous or not, it's unusual for him to use such uncertain words.

「I8, speak your opinion frankly. Does it seem likely to you that I should read the contents of this book directly?」

「Yes. If the contents written here are correct, then in my humble opinion the only one who can pass judgement on them is Your Holiness.」

「Is it an urgent matter? If not then I could read a written copy.」

「It is my personal opinion that the sooner it is looked into the better. However, taking into account the possibility of a delayed reaction trap being applied, it may be better to use a written copy.」

After a moment's thought, I snatch the book from I8's hands, and start to read. The probability of a trap was low from the beginning. This is a person who has easily penetrated the very center of the heavily guarded Divine Word Religion. Even without using a roundabout method of a trap, assassination would be simple enough. If something should happen to me, then it means that was all I ever amounted to. If my life comes to an end, there are subordinates who can inherit my will. Should the occasion arise, provisions for transfer of control are always ready for when someone becomes pope.

However, in a different sense this book is something incredible. I am only just about able to stop myself from wanting to clutch my head.

「Why a spider?」

Sajin mutters that while peering at the book from the side. If the contents of the book is incredible, then what's scribbled in the margins is also incredible.

「Did Wakaba-san have such a playful side to her as well?」

「Idiot. This is a hidden message.」

At first glance, it appears to be a cute drawing of a spider, but this is an important message. Firstly, the spider's body is white. Speaking of a spider, the first thing that comes to mind is the one known as the oldest Divine Beast, but her family is black bodied. Also, with no sickle-like feet either. A monster with a white body and sickle-like feet. As a holder of the Record skill, like I did just before, I am able to recall the strife that monster caused.

「The Nightmare of the Labyrinth.」

The mysterious monster with a connection to the Divine Word Religion. That is what this drawing represents.

Translation notes:

The Record skill has shown up before, eg in S24.

“Angel's halo” - this phrase in Japanese can also mean “the glow of freshly washed or treated hair”.

Chapter 258 - Revive The Vampire Princess

That's good enough for Divine Word Religion. I'll go visit them again after a break of several days. Then I only need to hear their answer.

However, therein lies a problem. While I could convey what I wanted to say in a book, there's no way to hear their reply with a book. Well, it's basically impossible that they would take my circumstances into consideration and reply to me using a book. What's with that exchange diary-like setting? Shouldn't an "exchange diary" be more bittersweet or something? Just where's the sadness in an exchange diary that is seriously discussing the fate of the world eh. On top of that the other party is an ojii-san as well. If he was an austere occhan then it would be fine, but that guy is completely past his prime you know.

So for that reason, I need someone to act as a listener-cum-negotiator. My not-so-random selection is, vampire girl. The Demon King is busy with various things anyway, and she's still the Demon King after all. It wouldn't do to just blithely bring her to the very center of enemy territory, surely. The Divine Word Religion is like the pillar of the human society after all.

I have various other reasons other than a process of elimination to bring vampire girl along. If I say I have them then I do! It's not like I have no acquaintances to bring along other than vampire girl, okay! Ahem!

Well, to put it bluntly, vampire girl and the Divine Word Religion have a bit of fate between them you see. After all, the country where vampire girl was born in, was basically destroyed by the Divine Word Religion, right? Ah, I guess it was actually destroyed. The town that vampire girl was born in was completely trampled over, so I guess it's not really any difference. Basically, they're about equivalent to being enemies.

Vampire girl, really. Ever since Mera got angry at you, you've sure been depressed huh. Or not so much depressed, but in turmoil? What does it mean to be human? What does it mean to be a vampire? Who am I? What am I? That kind of thing. She's lost sight of her own identity it seems. It's kinda like she's interpreted what Mera wanted to convey in a different way, and has gotten lost

after dashing around at full power every which way.

When I tried asking Mera whether it's okay not to amend his explanation, he said,

「There is no meaning to it unless ojou-sama finds her own answer.」

, so it seems that he doesn't intend to help. Are you sure? At this rate I'm worried that she might come up with some weird answer though.

In other words, to let her distract herself I've thus decided to throw her in at the deep end with a task that can become her current objective. As to how her contact with the Divine Word Religion will work out, that's an unknown for now, but well, I'm sure it'll work out somehow. As long as I hold her reins tightly, it shouldn't develop into a particularly bad situation, probably.

「In other words, prepare.」

「What do you mean, in other words - how does that explain anything? Suddenly turning up and saying “in other words” doesn't mean shit, obviously.」

Good girls should not say words like “shit”! Thus, a chop to the head. Maybe I heard her skull cracking or felt her neck breaking, but well, don't mind it. I press a book into her hands.

This particular book is quite thick. It's about time that vampire girl has to learn about important matters such as the composition of the world, about the System, and about what we are about to do next. In the first place, if she doesn't know about such things then she won't be able to talk with the Divine Word Religion's pope-san anyway. Vampire girl also more or less has Taboo, so it's fine if she maxes that, and I could also have her deliberately use her skill points to do that as well.

Muhaha. Before such an important announcement her worries over her identity should be blown away! I'll have you forget all your little worries! Come now, you shall tremble in fear before the truth of the world!

...Oh? Haven't I... just increased her worries?

Yup. It's all good. Vampire girl is a fine adult. I'm sure she'll manage one way or another by herself you know.

Now then, that's enough about vampire girl. Maybe it's bad but whatever. I can leave the rest to Mera, her guardian. I guess I'll go check out oni-kun as well.

Thus I have come to oni-kun's place. I have walked, for once. Normally I just teleport though. Well, we're living in the same mansion after all so the distance isn't far enough to be worth teleporting.

「Shiro-san, welcome.」

Oni-kun greets me with a gentle smile. You'd never think he held Wrath. I wonder how he actually came to hold Wrath.

「What brings you here today?」

「Heresy resistance.」

「Yeah, it's finally risen as far as Greater Heresy Resistance level 5. It seems that Nullity will take a bit more time, but things should already have improved quite a lot since previously.」

Uh-huh, uh-huh. That's going well. I don't get tired having from having a conversation with oni-kun. From just a single word he can guess what I'm trying to say. I guess this is what's meant by being able to read the mood.

「Status.」

「Yeah? Erm, ah-hah! That's almost returned to normal as well. About 90% I guess. I think that'll become fully recovered in a short while.」

It can't be helped if he occasionally misinterprets things or misses things. Ugh, not being able to talk is painful. I don't think I'll be able to improve though. After all, getting in contact with others is such a pain.

Oni-kun's physical condition is still recovering. As yet he hasn't activated Wrath either. At this rate, I guess it's just a matter of time until he learns Heresy Nullity. In that case, oni-kun will no longer lose his way due to Wrath anymore, probably. If that happens then oni-kun will be able to determine how he wants to proceed from now on by his own will.

I hand oni-kun a book. It has the same contents as the book I gave to vampire girl just now.

「Today's book is a bit thicker huh.」

「Read it, then do what you want.」

「Eh?」

I turn my back to oni-kun and leave. Once he's read that, then it's up to oni-kun to decide what to do next. If he decides to align with my side then good. If he becomes hostile then I'll show no mercy. If he stays out of it then that's fine too. I don't have the right to decide oni-kun's choice. Everything is up to oni-kun.

That's not just for oni-kun either. I could say the same to vampire girl. For now it might seem like she's working under me a bit at a time, but, I have no intention to bind vampire girl. Since picking her up I granted her the minimum amount of power to be able to get by. However, vampire girl already has enough power to be able to live freely within this world. Vampire girl is free to make whatever choice she wants afterwards. Indeed, she can even choose the path of becoming hostile to me.

I stop walking. If vampire girl becomes hostile to me, what will I do? That's obvious. If someone stands in my way, then I will show no mercy no matter who they might be. No matter who.

Translation notes:

“Ojii-san” means grandfather or male senior-citizen. Occhan is more like “uncle” or middle-aged man and more colloquial. See here for a concept image of an “austere occhan”:

<http://sea.ap.teacup.com/emikopom/243.html>

“Good girls should not...” - imagine this being said in the tone of a mother or teacher admonishing a child.

Chapter 259 - Maou-Sama Is Scary

I decided I should inform the Demon King about this and that on the Divine Word Religion. Normally I should have reported this before getting in contact with them, but basically I forgot. Well, I guess it was inevitable. I've been doing whatever I want until now anyway.

However, the other party this time is the most influential person amongst the humans, so unlike previous occasions I can't just sweep it under the carpet if I screw up you know. If there's a blunder with the negotiations even I wouldn't be able to patch things up by myself. Well, it's not like I couldn't do anything, but it's more like all I can do is "kill all the nuisances!" kinda thing. If I did that then it would cause big problems amongst the humans. And if it comes down to that then Kuro would blow his top. I don't want him to come charging at me.

So for those reasons, in case of a blunder I'll leave it all to the Demon King to patch things up. It's fine, it's fine. The worst that can happen is the humans become a bit more hostile. Do your best, do your best! You can do it!

Yup. Whether I succeed or fail I won't suffer any losses. What a wonderful life. Maybe the Demon King will get some ulcers though.

Which is why I've come to the Demon King's place, but my timing was bad. Just a bit before I got there, it seems the Demon King had some visitors come to her room. When I entered the Demon King's room without knocking, there was the Demon King reclining in her chair with her feet on the desk, with two people standing to attention in front of her. Balto isn't around. Mostly likely he's rushing around after the Demon King forced the work onto him again.

「Ah, Shiro-chan. Good timing. Come in.」

At the Demon King's urging, I enter the room. Damn, if there's others here then I should have come at another time. I was just about to leave when the Demon King called out to me as well. At the Demon King's beckoning, I can't avoid walking over.

「Let's hear out their story together.」

I don't understand the situation but I consent anyway.

「Okay, let's hear your report then.」

The Demon King said that while smiling broadly. Hm? She seems to be in a bad mood somehow?

As if they can sense the Demon King's bad mood, the two people have stiff expressions. Of the two people, one is a sexy onee-san. The other is a shota. The onee-san is the 2nd army commander, the shota is the 6th army commander. They might look colourful on the outside, but they're respected big-shots amongst the demons.

「Yes. On this occasion, my 6th army, with the assistance of the 2nd army, succeeded in cornering the Hero. However, when we were on the verge of success we received a counterattack, with the end result that we lost some valuable war potential. I have no excuse.」

The heck? Cornering the hero?

I unconsciously glance at the Demon King. Well, I keep my eyes closed even while I "look" at her though. Did the Demon King notice my gaze perhaps, since she nods her head in assent while still in a bad humour.

Preparations are being made in order to erase the very existence of the Hero from the System itself. Thus, until those preparations are complete an order was given to not make any imprudent actions. Despite that, this lot made an attempt on the Hero it seems.

「I apologise as well. If the agent from my unit had been able to administer a lethal dose of poison as had been planned, then such a result would never have occurred.」

Hmm-mm. So basically, a spy or something from the onee-san's unit poisoned the Hero, but he didn't receive all of it. Then the shota's troops attacked the Hero who had been weakened by poison, but they were beaten instead. Or something like that.

Certainly, when considered normally it would be a huge failure, but actually it's fine. That they didn't kill the Hero. We're actually saved from trouble because they were too incompetent to kill the Hero.

「Maou-sama, Sanatoria-sama was only providing support. The 6th army lead the strategy, so I shall carry all the responsibility.」

Ooh! How praiseworthy despite being a shota! However, you guys are making a fundamental misunderstanding you know.

「Say, aren't you guys making some kind of misunderstanding?」

The Demon King speaks my own thoughts. The smile on her face has changed. Into an evil sadistic smile.

「You know, I'm pretty sure I sent out a directive you know? "Don't make any attempt on the Hero."」

Indeed, the tactical blunders and so on are a trivial matter. The loss of war potential is of no concern at all to the Demon King. Actually, lose as much as you want. The problem, is that despite being told not to make any attempt on the Hero they still made a move. That was the problem was the very beginning.

「So why did you disregard the order and make an attempt on the Hero I wonder?」

She might be smiling, but her eyes are furious. And also, overawing the entire room. What's the mental state of the two in the middle? I don't even need to ask. Their faces have turned pale and they're continuously trembling, making it quite clear what's going through their heads.

「Hmm? How can I understand if you stay silent, eh? Or maybe, perhaps you couldn't hear me? To pretend not to hear what the Demon King says, you've sure got some nerve eh.」

There's no way that they didn't hear of course, how malicious. The shota was about to open his mouth to speak in a panic, but it seems he couldn't properly get the words out, and just repeatedly opened and closed his mouth like a goldfish.

「I am... terribly sorry.」

He was finally able to squeeze out those completely basic words of apology. That sure seemed to be the most he could possibly manage.

「Hm? What is that apology for? For the strategic mistake? For arbitrarily

taking action? For not listening to what I said?」

The Demon King unrelentingly piles more and more verbal abuse on top of the shota. In comparison to that, the onee-san has a bit more composure.

「Maou-sama, your anger is most justified. However, we took those actions out of concern for the Hero's war potential. Although it ended in a failure this time, it is a fact that we were on the verge of cornering the Hero. I am sure we will succeed next time.」

Ah, now she's done it.

A loud crunch reverberated through the room. At the same time, there was a sound like something hard being crushed.

Some red body fluid is falling onto the shota's face. It seems that the shota doesn't understand why. With a blank expression, he raises his eyes to see the source of the body fluid. Then, his eyes meet with the onee-san, who has a similarly blank expression and has lost an arm.

Screams. The onee-san and shota scream at the same time. The Demon King is gazing at them with a disinterested and cold expression, chewing on the onee-san's arm. Perhaps it's the power of Gluttony, since the Demon King's mouth is clearly too small to fit that in.

「I said... do not make... any attempt... on the Hero. Capish?」

As if instructing someone, the Demon King announces that using pauses between words. The onee-san listens to those words while pressing down on the stump of her lost arm. If she didn't listen she'd be killed eh.

「I don't care about the Hero's war potential. What's necessary is for the Hero to stay alive as the Hero for now. Ah, I guess it's because you don't understand the reason why huh? Well, your job is to follow my orders and fight to the death after all.」

The shota looked startled.

「What? Did you think of yourselves as being special or something? Even though you're nothing more than trash who I wouldn't have the least concern with disposing of right now? You sure are tremendously conceited.」

The Demon King shakes her head at that completely shocked expression. Well, her real feelings are probably about half that.

「Get this into heads okay. You lot are worth nothing to me. If anything, all you need to do is kill lots of enemies and when you die in the end, just return your energy to the world. If you don't like that, then kill more than your share of enemies. If you can't then die. If you can't do as you're told then die. Die already. Die! Die! Die!」

Both the onee-san who has lost blood and the shota have pale faces. Because they realise that the Demon King is serious. Well, I guess I'll hand them a lifeline.

「Balto, death from overwork.」

I mutter that. The pair of them have a reasonable social position, so if they're lost then all sorts of extra work will come along. That harm will definitely go Balto's way. If he's abused any further, Balto will die.

「That'd be annoying. Oh well. I guess I can forgive you this time.」

Seeing the Demon King's attitude change so easily, the pair of them are dumbfounded, but when I turn towards them they come to their senses, give a bow and leave in a rush. Seeing their state, I shrug my shoulder. I would do the same as the Demon King.

「So, what did you come here for, Shiro-chan?」

Ah, that's right. Later, when I've talked about the Divine Word Religion, the Demon King slumps at her desk.

Translation notes:

“Sexy onee-san” - like how oji-san can mean both uncle and middle-aged man and ojii-san can mean both grandfather and old man, onee-san can mean both elder sister and young woman. Basically a woman of marriageable age but not yet married. So a “sexy onee-san” type of character would be the confident and seductive young woman type, rather than sweet, innocent, cute, pure, girlish *etc.*

“Shota” - male equivalent of “loli”.

“Capish” - Ariel didn’t actually say this or something particularly close but I couldn’t resist since it fits the mood of the scene.

Oni 14 - Decision

I pick up the book. I ponder for a while, then put it back on the desk. Then I close my eyes and think, and before I know it I've picked up the book again. I've been doing this repetitively for a long time.

I gaze at the book I picked up. To be precise it's not a book, more like a notebook. However, to me the contents have become weightier than any book. As I flick through the pages, I give up on thinking just how many dozens of times I've already reread it. I've already memorised the contents. Though I've not quite memorised it verbatim, the content doesn't change even if I reread it. Even if I want it to change, it doesn't.

What's written in here, is about the risk of the world collapsing, and the method to avoid it.

I bury my head in my hands. I had known about how this world came to be and about the System due to Taboo, but I'd never have thought the situation had reached the final stages. If this is really true, then I sure have been reborn into an awful world. That's only if it's true though.

Certainly, I can't believe that what is written here is the truth. No, rather than saying that what's written is mostly only the truth, maybe it would be better to say that these are facts with some unwritten lies.

The reason I think that, is because it's too good to be true. The method written here to deal with the problem, is that if we can break up the System then the world can be saved. However, is that really the case? Until now, since such a thing has never been done before, will it really work out that well? Is it really so simple that the world can be truly saved as easily as snapping your fingers? If that's true, then why has the world had to go through such hardships until now? Maybe I'm just being unfairly suspicious, but I simply can't believe in this.

In addition, if the System is gone, then that means skills and status will also be gone. That which has been depended upon for survival until now, will be lost.

The chaos from that should be particularly significant. What used to be easily possible with certain status values, would no longer be possible. The prosperity brought about by skills, will collapse. Effectively a depiction of pandemonium in Hell, I would expect. It might be similar to taking away electricity from modern Japan. No, considering the actual impacts involved, it may be even worse.

This book doesn't touch on those aspects at all. Based on that, maybe inconvenient facts are being concealed, and only deceptively good facts are being covered. That's what I've come to think.

To be blunt, I don't actually understand the inner workings of the System. In that sense, Shiro-san has definitely made more progress than I have. For that reason, even if something has been concealed, I don't have the slightest idea even why it might have been concealed. Or even whether anything has actually been hidden in the first place.

There's no end to my doubts. However, I cannot simply discard the contents of this book as being bullshit either. In these incredibly precise contents, there is a persuasive argument. Even when I compare this to the contents from Taboo, there's nothing out of place. For that reason, the conclusion I reached after all my agonising, is that this mostly true with some secrets and lies mixed in.

I tap my finger on the book placed on the desk. If this is mostly true, then why did Shiro-san hand me this book? Well, that part is obvious enough though. In short, I'm sure she's telling me to choose my own destiny. Considering the contents of this book, the world is going to enter a period of upheaval. Shiro-san, is promoting that. She's telling me that I now have to start thinking about what I should do when the time comes, I'm sure.

Shiro-san, might be unexpectedly softhearted. Though we weren't at all particularly close in our previous lives, she's going so far to aid me after all. With Heresy Resistance, with this book. It's impossible that she doesn't realise that when I've read this book, that there is a real possibility that we may become enemies.

I better not come up with any half-assed conclusions eh.

At this rate the world will be destroyed. There's probably no doubt about

that. However, when is that going to happen? There's nothing written about that. All that's written, is that at this rate the world will be destroyed. Based on the manner of writing where no definite timeframe is given, even an exaggerated example of the world being destroyed after a thousand years wouldn't contradict the book.

Demolish the System, then use that energy to stop the destruction of the world. I think that part is the truth. If there's a lie written here it would be in the description details, which covers even the methods and state of progress. To be honest, considering all the technical terms I can't really make much sense of it all, but if it was made up then Shiro-san has an incredible imagination. If this all came from her imagination, then some scent of madness should be drifting around. It seems better to simply accept that what's written here is the truth.

However, there still won't be enough energy. It needs to be supplemented. I guess this part is where the problem lies. Supplement, in other words, to kill people and collect the energy. That's precisely the reason why she is trying to launch a large scale war between the demons and the humans.

It's a path that is unavoidable in order to save the world. However, is that really the case? Going back to the timeline for the collapse of the world just now, it appears likely that it's not necessarily the situation. If it's the case that Shiro-san is concealing the timeline for the collapse of the world and there's still some leeway, then wouldn't it mean that this atrocity isn't necessary? In that case, why does it seem that Shiro-san is going to such great lengths to hurry up the action? Is there a reason why it has to be this way?

It's probably here. There should be somewhere here that Shiro-san wants to keep hidden no matter what. I need to know what that something is. And also, whether there's anything else that might be hidden.

I stand up with the book in my hand. When I look outside the window, I see that it's gotten really late in the day. It's something I've only realised recently, but when it's time to eat or when it's time to sleep Shiro-san never goes outside. She's often not around during the day, but she always returns to the mansion around that time. Around bedtime. Right now, Shiro-san should be in her room.

I use the Appraisal Stone to confirm my status. Almost a complete recovery, but in other words, not yet a complete recovery. I only have two magic swords as well. And even those are hastily made ones from when my status had not yet recovered. I feel uneasy. Not only do I not feel in perfect health, Shiro-san's power is unknown. If my impression isn't mistaken, then even if I was in perfect condition it seems that I would have no chance of winning. However, if what Shiro-san is aiming for is not something that I'm able to accept, then it might turn into combat right there. I pray that will not happen.

Having made my decision, I walk towards Shiro-san's room.

Blood 31 - Meanie

「Ugh, guah!」

During class I felt nauseous and hastily covered my mouth. Because I've been throwing up all the time recently, goshujin-sama has been muttering things like "puke girl" all the time. I don't want to be called something so disgraceful.

「Sophia, is it happening again?」

While I'm desperately trying to hold back my vomit, the prince-like Waldo's face shows up right in front of me. That's when I reached my limit.

I'm now lying down on the bed in the school infirmary. Since I was scolded by Merazofis, I've frequently been in the care of the school infirmary. It's not that my physical condition is poor, it's completely a mental problem.

Starting with Waldo, it's painful to even face the boys I had used Charm on. I don't even know how I could dare to interact with them in the first place, as until recently I could only see them as my natural food, but I can't do that anymore now that I regained my awareness as a human. Including my previous life, I have not had proper contact with others after all. Much less with boys.

I've already crossed the line so even I am wondering what I'm saying myself, but this is something I cannot avoid. The me at that time could only see them as things. I had no awareness of them being people. I used Charm on them as brainwashing and I treated them like things. Even if I do say so myself I'm the worst.

Because I've realised that, I've been completely avoiding them. The Charm skill in the set of Vampire skills, unlike the stand-alone Charm skill, is not actually that powerful. The reason why I was able to completely control them, was because there was just such a big difference in status values. However, now that I've stopped Charm and am keeping my distance, even they should be regaining their consciousness. Several of them have been able to separate from me already.

Yes, several of them. The problem lies with the ones who are still trying to get

involved with me despite being cut off from Charm. Waldo is one of those. I don't know what his aim is, but just by getting close to me I get anxious, so I wish he'd stop.

Just when things were starting to settle down, when I no longer seemed likely to be vomiting, goshujin-sama dropped a bomb on me. What the heck? The destruction of the world? And how to stop that? Even if you suddenly tell me about all that, what are you asking me to do? I really don't have time for all that, so if you suddenly disclose a big problem to me on top of that, there's nothing I can do about it.

The Divine Word Religion is certainly something I've thought about. If not for the war with the Divine Word Religion, my parents would never have died.

However, if you asked me if they would have been happy otherwise, I cannot give an immediate answer. I recall Merazofis's words. Then, I wonder to myself, "Would my parents be proud of me as I am now?" The answer is, no. To them who were human, my way of life as a vampire is definitely not something that they could accept.

Then, if that war had never happened and I had been living with my parents still, what would have happened to me? Would I have been able to hide being a vampire and been able to live like a human? I don't know. This is just a hypothetical argument after all, and with my meagre imagination not a single idea of such a scene comes to mind. No matter what I imagine, all I can come up with is my guise as a vampire.

At the end of the day, the truth of me being a vampire won't be overturned. That it won't overturned, is undeniable. There is no other way for the current me other than to be a vampire, something that I've accepted deep down. To put it bluntly, if I was asked whether I can still return to being human, I could never assent to that.

If the System goes away, my skills should also be lost. At such a time, my vampire skill would also be lost. Then, I would no longer be a vampire? I would become a mere human?

No thanks! That would no longer be me. I'm a vampire, so if I'm not a vampire then I'm not me.

However, if the System is not destroyed then the world will end anyway. If the world ends then I'd be dead too. Either I die, or I stop being a vampire.

That's, not really a choice. What can I do then.

Due to lack of sleep my consciousness has become dim. Even though I have Faint Resistance, there's still limits. Thanks to Sense of Pain Nullity I can ignore my bad physical condition somewhat, but since blood is mixed in every time I vomit it's certain that I have a perforated stomach. Even if I say so for myself, my brain has totally gone to mush.

Ahh, I want to drink blood. Since then I haven't drank a single drop of blood. I'm a True Ancestor, so even if I don't drink blood I won't die anyway, and my status values won't drop either. However, it's a matter of my feelings. If I don't drink blood, then it's like a human who subsists only on raw nutrients. Though you can live that way, there's no joy. Even if there's no influence on my status values, if I don't drink then I get irritated and can't settle down.

「Feeling any better?」

It was only when I was spoken to that I noticed that there was a person next to the bed. Even if I feel bad that's so careless of me.

「I'm fine.」

I reply while pretending to be calm. When I look up, as I expected, I see Waldo.

「That's a lie. Nobody would accept that when you have such a pale face.」

Waldo leans forwards and looks into my eyes. Not only that, but he puts his hand on the bed, as if to block me from trying to escape.

「What do you think you're doing?」

「Don't you want to drink blood?」

I couldn't avoid twitching in response. I'd was actually thinking that just now after all. That after Waldo has been cut off from my Charm, it seems that he's noticed my real identity.

My throat gulps. The boy in front of me seems like he's a sweet and delicious fruit. Due to my enhanced five senses, the scent of Waldo's sweat, his slightly

raised body temperature, and even the sound of his racing heart can be heard. Even though he's cut off from Charm, it seems that Waldo is still weak to me.

「If it's you, I don't mind giving you everything.」

At those words my rationality burnt away.

「Now I've really done it.」

Rather than returning to the dormitories, we've snuck out from the campus and come to the mansion where goshujin-sama stays.

「I'm feeling really refreshed.」

Waldo smiles widely while saying that. Out of his mouth, long canines are peeking out. Yeah, I've really done it. In my overenthusiasm I sucked too much blood.

If your blood is sucked by a vampire then you become a vampire. That being said, just being sucked is not enough to turn you into a vampire. To become a vampire, then either the vampire who is sucking the blood has to think about wanting a retainer while doing the bloodsucking or you must expire after a lethal dose of blood is sucked. Either of those requirements must be satisfied. In this case, because I hadn't done any bloodsucking for so long, I accidentally sucked too much blood. Thanks to that, Waldo is now a proper vampire.

「You're the son of a noble family aren't you!? If you become a vampire, that's obviously going to be a problem!」

What the heck am I doing by piling on new problems when I'm already inundated with problems!? Argh, really!? What should I do!?

「Shut up.」

While I'm writing in agony, I was kicked by goshujin-sama. I want to cry.

Translation notes:

This title (“hidoin” in Japanese) is a bit of slang, a contraction of “cruel and heroine”. It's a similar contraction to “geroin” (puke girl).

According to “Oni vs Oni ①”, Sophia has “Faint Resistance LV7”.

Chapter 260 - Just Who Created All This Chaos!?

It seems vampire girl has charged into the mansion in a somewhat confused state. Well, okay, whatever. Actually, it's not okay but, well, this is the vampire girl we're talking about. From the monitoring done by my clones I have a rough idea what happened anyway.

But, you know? Once the mood progressed to a dubious stage I cut the monitoring, but when they came out there was a new vampire. Peeking in on a love scene is certainly too much so I had cut the monitoring, but I seriously wonder what happened.

For starters, I'll silence the vampire girl, who is squawking noisily.

「Bleagh!」

Today we have a beautiful demonstration of a < shape by vampire girl. The moment the boy with her sees that, his eyes open wide.

「How dare you!」

He comes rushing at me. Drawing his sword he attempts to stab me. Ah, vampire girl, I guess you haven't disciplined your retainer yet huh?

The moment I decided to deal with him properly, a figure suddenly landed between the boy and me. The figure used something like a Judo throwing technique to push the boy down onto the floor, locking his elbow joint. Since he's a vampire I'm sure he could deliberately break his arm to escape from that, but he's fresh out of the oven though. I'm sure such an unconventional technique wouldn't occur to him yet.

「Ugh, let me go!」

「I will not. This is for your sake as well, Waldo-sama. You must not oppose this lady.」

「That voice... No way, Felmina!？」

Ooh, he noticed. That's correct. The one who's on top of you is actually your

ex-fiancée Felmina-chan.

She's a pitiful girl who made valiant efforts to try to save the poor boys under the Charm of vampire girl, and on top of being crushed, or rather ignored, she was then cast aside by the fiancé she tried to save. To take care of and support such a girl - I'm super nice! In addition, I'm giving her training and work to do as well - I'm super caring!

「Waldo-sama, please calm down. Otherwise you will be killed.」

Oh, you think she's looking at me with fearful eyes? It's just your imagination. I won't kill him okay? That kid is technically the child of a big shot noble anyway. Killing him would lead to bothersome stuff. So you don't need to be so afraid, okay? Really?

「Gahah! Uh, uuhhn. Cough. Goshujin-sama, could you please not kick me every time?」

Ah, vampire girl has revived. She's wiping away blood that slipped from her mouth with a handkerchief. Don't mind the little things. It's not like she'd die anyway.

「By the way goshujin-sama, who is that girl? She seems to be an acquaintance of Waldo though.」

「Eh?」← Felmina

「Eh?」← Waldo

「Eh?」← Me

「Eh?」← Vampire girl

Heavy silence. Umm, vampire girl, seriously, could it be that you don't remember Felmina-chan? Or rather, you never even had any awareness of her? How wretched...

Sorry, our vampire girl is a bit like THAT on the inside. She doesn't mean any harm. Because she doesn't mean to she ignores her own wickedness though.

While sitting astride on Waldo-kun, Felmina-chan's shoulders start to shiver softly. Waldo-kun drops his gaze to the floor with an ashamed expression. Vampire girl realises she's done something bad but doesn't know the cause, and while pretending to be calm she's totally giving herself away with her flustered

eyes.

So this is a love triangle huh. It's nothing to do with me though so I'll evacuate. Let's go.

「Don't you run away!」

Tsk, vampire girl caught my sleeve. Even if you beg me with such a face, there are some things that even I cannot do anything about! In other words, friendship, effort, conquest, love or passion infused communication, and most of all, I don't understand the human heart.

Gahh! Let go! I'm escaping from here! Or rather, don't drag me into this! Isn't this a bomb you planted! It's already exploded beyond hope so just beg for forgiveness on your belly! Well, it's not like she herself even realises what she did wrong though anyway.

「Erm. Just how did things end up like this I wonder.」

Oni-kun! You came at a good time! Save me!

「In short, the start of the incident was Sophia-san turning Waldo-san into a vampire then.」

「Indeed.」

Things have calmed down for the moment, so we started holding an inquiry in a relatively small conference room inside the mansion. After all, this mansion has rooms as big as university lecture rooms apparently are. I've not been to a university lecture, so the only image I have is of a large sprawling classroom with university students milling around.

In contrast to oni-kun's weary expression, vampire girl replies with a brazen expression, or at least she thinks so herself. It's obviously impossible to smooth over a face that's so close to crying though.

「Then, when Waldo-san became hostile towards Shiro-san for kicking Sophia-san, Felmina-san stopped him.」

「Yes.」

「Indeed.」

The apparently calm looking Waldo-kun, and the still somewhat depressed

looking Felmina-chan reply.

「So, that's when Sophia-san asked who Felmina-san was.」

Silence. Vampire girl's face has cramped, Waldo-kun is trying to keep his face immobile but surely he's not calm on the inside and Felmina-chan's response was to start crying again.

「Felmina-san tried all sorts of things to rescue Waldo-san from the effects of Sophia's Charm, but in the end those failed. Waldo-san then denounced and expelled her. Afterwards, she was taken into Shiro-san's care and worked as a subordinate.」

「Indeed.」

Felmina-chan confirms oni-kun's words while crying. Against the opponent she fought so hard against, she'd obviously be downhearted to have not even been recognised.

「In conclusion, it's Sophia-san's fault.」

「Objection!」

「Objection overruled.」

Oni-kun's decrees his judgement, vampire girl demurs. Oni-kun immediately overrules. No mercy at all.

「No matter how I look at it, it's Sophia-san's fault. In the first place, are you using Charm on people and brainwashing them as a joke? That's not something you should do to the same people as yourself. It's an atrocity.」

Scathing criticism, as if despising her utterly. I'm somewhat surprised. Oni-kun has a rather gentle personality after all, so I wouldn't have expected him to express his emotions in words so strongly. Well, after thinking about it for a bit I guess I can understand. When all's said and done, oni-kun is the Ruler of Wrath. Deep in his heart dwells an endless rage. Instead, his gentle everyday guise should be considered the exception, and this guise should be considered the norm.

In response to the unexpectedly strong criticism, vampire girl shudders for a moment then looks downward. Felmina-chan looks on at that vampire girl with a cold expression and Waldo-kun doesn't interpose himself. That Waldo-kun

has decided to stay beside vampire girl still despite being cut off from Charm, suggesting he's taken a side. Or rather, if he'd just casually tagged along here without thinking then he'd have to be a seriously shallow guy.

「...am not...」

Vampire girl mutters in a subdued voice. Even with my sense of hearing that's all I could hear, that's how soft a mutter it was. However, it was clear that it was a mutter with real determination behind it.

「What?」

「I'm not the same!」

This time she shouts.

「I am a vampire. I'm not a normal person. I'm not the same.」

Most likely, I'm the only one here who comprehended the weight of the words she has said here and now. Those words are a declaration that vampire girl will completely cast aside her humanity. But...

「And, what of it?」

The mood in this chamber, has gotten as heavy as lead. Anger is pressing down so hard it might as well have mass.

「There's good deeds and then there's evil deeds. No matter what reasons you might have, evil deeds are still evil. What you've done, is evil no matter how much you protest.」

Felmina-chan gulps. Waldo-kun's face stiffens while not being able to preserve his poker face.

「What you call evil deeds, is the way of life for vampires. To deny me that, means to deny my very being itself. If it's evil then fine. That's who I am.」

All by herself, vampire girl directly accepted that anger head-on.

They glare at each other.

Only time passes by.

Umm, I'm getting pretty hungry, so mind if I leave?

—

“love scene” - the word used here (“nureba”) originates from Kabuki theatre. It can also be used to refer to love/romantic/sex scenes in films.

“◁shape” - a follow-on reference from “Oni 11”.

“he’s fresh out of the oven though” - the implication here is that Waldo has only just become a vampire. A newly baked vampire as it were, so isn’t used to things.

“beg for forgiveness on your belly” - Shiro suggests that Sophia do a “dogeza”.

When Sophia says “I’m not the same” that’s in response to Wrath’s “same people as yourself”. Here, the “same people as yourself” has the sense of “fellow humans” but without explicitly saying “human”.

Oni 15 - Non-Human

Author's comment:

Summary up to the previous chapter -

Vampire - Ate what was offered to her ?

Oni - What are you doing? Are you an idiot who wants to die? ?

Spider - Nothing to do with me ?

We glare at each other. The anger simmering in my chest boils up, and I somehow manage to contain it in desperation. If my anger explodes here, then it's obvious that I will lose control of myself to Wrath again. That's why, even while glaring at Sophia-san, I fully utilised my powers of reason and attempted to suppress the anger burning within me.

To me, what Sophia-san has done is not something that I can forgive. Charm magic, brainwashing and forced slavery. Those are the ones I detest the most. Then after calmly doing all that, Sophia-san used the excuse "because I'm a vampire" and became defiant - I will never be able to forgive that.

Coincident with that, in the back of my mind I realise that the point of the conversation has shifted. To begin with, this all started from when Sophia-san turned the demon called Waldo-san into a vampire. Furthermore, before that he was related to the charm magic that Sophia-san had spread everywhere, but let's not go there. In that case, what's important right now, is what Waldo-san thinks about having become a vampire I guess.

「Waldo-san.」

「Y, yes?」

When I call out to him, Waldo-san responds in a shrill voice. From his point of view both Sophia-san and I are pretty much monsters. With the likes of us two glaring at each other in this closed space, it certainly would have become a very uneasy place to be in. It's not surprising that he couldn't conceal the tension in his voice.

「Waldo-san, what do you think about having become a vampire?」

To my inquiry, Waldo-san ponders for a moment.

「I think of it as an honour.」

In that moment, he was probably thinking what the best answer could be. So that he could convey in a short phrase that he himself wanted to become a vampire, and had decided that even after hearing about the charm magic. In that case, there's nothing more for me to say regarding Waldo-san. However, the other matter is different.

「Waldo-san is saying that. That he himself wished for it, so because of that I have no intention to say anything more. However, Felmina-san deserves an apology. Her life has been ruined because of Sophia-san. No matter how you look at it, that's your fault. Regardless of stuff about vampires etc.」

Without averting my eyes from Sophia-san, I declare that. In this brief period I've fully grasped just how big Sophia-san's obsession about being a vampire is. However, that and this are different matters. Whether you're a vampire or whatever, there's no way that absolves the guilt of having ruined someone's life. On top of that, because she's completely forgotten about it, it cannot be settled.

Sophia-san doesn't move while glaring at me. However, her eyes are swimming a bit. I guess even she senses that she's at a disadvantage. Her attitude is like that of a scolded child desperately looking for a way to escape.

Suddenly, something feels out of place. Sophia-san and I are both reincarnators. Combining this and our previous existence it adds up to quite a lot of age. Yet despite that, going by how she behaves her mind seems quite childish. I wonder what that is about?

「Sophia.」

My pondering is interrupted by Shiro-san's voice. It's a quiet voice, but has a strength of presence that cannot be ignored. On hearing that voice, Sophia-san gains a small gleam in her eyes. Is she expecting assistance perhaps?

「Apologise to Felmina-chan.」

However, the words that Shiro-san speaks, are not what Sophia-san was expecting. For an instant Sophia-san has a vacant expression of surprise on her face, and after that her face turns red in a flash. She throws a glare at Felmina-san and,

「Don't get cocky because you were called with -chan!」

Saying that she runs off. For your sharp parting remark, that's what you went with? It seems it's not just me who is dumbfounded, as there's a strange and unspeakable atmosphere pervading the room.

With that atmosphere, the first one to move was Waldo-san. Imploring the faces of the other three people, his glancing eyes turn towards the door that Sophia-san left through. Seeing Waldo-san like that, Felmina-san makes an imploring expression at Shiro-san. In response to that, Shiro-san silently nods her assent. Having received that, Felmina-san accompanies Waldo-san and leaves.

Remaining are just me and Shiro-san. I look at Shiro-san's face. It's as expressionless as ever. However, she seems somewhat displeased.

「Do you have some spare time?」

I call out to Shiro-san to forestall her as she appears about to get up. I originally came here because I had some business with Shiro-san. I just got dragged into Sophia-san's mess. As for when I questioned her and the others, properly speaking I had no right to pry into that as an outsider.

「Why is Sophia-san like that?」

Yet despite that, that's the question that I raise. Even though I have important matters that I must discuss. Because we've had a death battle in the past, perhaps I've developed some strange sentiment?

To my query, Shiro-san doesn't reply for a while. I got used to it during the question and answer session in the other dimension, but a conversation with Shiro-san requires patience. Since she's not standing up, I think she intends to reply. I think that if she didn't intend to reply then she probably would have left without saying anything.

「Because she's not human.」

The reply she gave after a lengthy pause, was a bit too plain for me to be able to understand. Because she's not human, well, saying that, I'm not human either. However, even though we're both non-human, I still don't understand Sophia-san.

「A human cannot understand a spider's feelings. A spider cannot understand a frog's feelings.」

It seems my doubt showed on my face. At Shiro-san's words, I understand somewhat. Even if we're both non-humans, I am an oni while Sophia-san is a vampire. Though human-shaped non-humans may be grouped together, there is still a clear difference. Because of that, misunderstandings will occur, is what Shiro-san is probably saying.

Certainly, I don't know anything about vampires. Neither the reason why Sophia-san obsesses about being a vampire, or how they live. Though she is clearly at fault, she was still so opposed to apologising, so perhaps there is something that a vampire is unable to concede. Though even if I think that, I still cannot forgive her after all.

Though saying that, blaming her one-sidedly might be barking up the wrong tree. Maybe I need to know a little about vampires.

When I gather my thoughts and raise my head, Shiro-san is eating something. If I'm not mistaken, then that appears to be the leg of a huge frog. Shiro-san is expressionlessly stuffing that into her mouth and eating it. Ah, it certainly seems that my understanding of non-humans is lacking. I have realised that just from seeing this scene. Furthermore, not being in the mood to ask any further questions, and having not confirmed anything about what I had originally wanted to ask, I ended up leaving in dejection.

Translation notes:

Sophia's summary of "Ate what was offered to her" implies something other than food. It's probably a reference to the phrase "据え膳食わぬは男の恥" which is normally translated as "It's a poor sort of man who runs away when a woman offers herself to him", except inverted.

Blood 32 - Sulkiness

There's been too much happening lately and it feels like my head is going to explode. When I woke up after going to bed in a huff and looked at things calmly, even I wonder what was up with me yesterday.

What Wrath was saying is correct. Even now I still can't remember Felmina and so on, or rather, I don't think I even have any awareness of her. Even I can realise that that is cruel. I myself understand one-sidedly treating someone like an enemy, having them take no notice of me, and then suffering the crushing shock of not even being recognised. Because I have experienced that myself. To Wakaba Hiroyuki, the existence of Negishi Akiko, was like that. After we have been reborn, being able to have our current relationship, gives a strange feeling though.

What I've done to Felmina, is bad I'm sure. I understand that. I understand it, but I don't feel like simply apologising.

The heck? Felmina-"chan", eh! I'd never have expected -chan. For THAT goshujin-sama, to AMIABLY, use -CHAN!

Sigh. Calm down, me. Recently, haven't I become a bit strange when it comes to goshujin-sama? I'm aware of how things were in our previous existence, but it somehow feels like things have recently been developing in an entirely different direction. This is a bad trend I'm sure.

However, I can't deny that I've thought of Felmina as being annoying anyway, and I don't think that feeling will change either. If I actually apologise with things as they are now, it'd simply be for form's sake and without an ounce of sincerity. If I'm going to apologise it should be after repenting honestly and my feelings having cooled down.

Besides all that, the one who annoys me the most right now, is that damn outsider who stuck his nose in and acts as if he owns the place and told me to apologise - Wrath. What's with that high-and-mighty view of his own opinion! Bad things are bad!? I understand that without being told! That's why recently

I've been vomiting while agonising after all!

Spurred on by my seething irritation, I get up from the bed I was lying on. In the end I didn't return to the dormitory yesterday, and was put up at the mansion overnight. When I open the curtains, I'm bathed in refreshing sunlight. It won't turn me into ashes of course, but that light makes my heart melancholy.

I'm sure they were waiting until I was awake, since with good timing there is a knock on the door. When I reply, one of the maids of the mansion asks if I need assistance with getting ready. I politely decline, and head over to the dining table where breakfast is being prepared. I find that other people are already there.

One of them is goshujin-sama. Her expression is the same as ever, but that's the face of someone thinking of nothing else but the breakfast she is about to eat. With that mood about her, I'm sure she won't respond.

「Good morning.」

「Good morning.」

I exchange greetings with Wrath, the other person already here. As if the room temperature had literally decreased, a battle of dangerous glares unfolds between us. Neither of us intend to yield, that much is clear.

A while after we start glaring at each other, the food is brought in. I'm sure just entering into this space where Wrath and I are trying to stare each other down is painful, so I'm impressed that the serving maids didn't allow anything to show on their faces. I separate my gaze from Wrath whose spirit had wavered, and take a seat next to goshujin-sama.

The entire meal time is silent. After we've finished eating, Wrath turns to look at me. That is clearly telling me that he wants to talk afterwards.

「Sophia, this is convenient timing so let's go visit the Divine Word Religion.」

Ripping that apart, is a rare long sentence from goshujin-sama. In this atmosphere, to completely ignore that and talk about taking me somewhere, her nerves are the same as ever, but where did you say you're taking me? If I didn't mishear, she said the Divine Word Religion or something?

「Eh? What do you mean?」

It's a bad habit of goshujin-sama, but she orders other people about without explanation, only giving the conclusion from her own reasoning. No matter what, I don't understand why I should be visiting the Divine Word Religion. Saying that, where exactly is the Divine Word Religion? Doesn't the Divine Word Religion have locations spread out around the world though?

Goshujin-sama is expressionless. Saying that, I don't think it's just my imagination that she appears to be astonished. Why doesn't she ever realise that her explanations are lacking, I really wish she would stop that.

「Divine Word Religion?」

While I'm agonising over what to do, Wrath's murmur brings me back to my senses. From the way he said it, it seems like he didn't understand the meaning of the words "Divine Word Religion". Ahh. I guess that would be the case for those living in the demon territory? I haven't heard Wrath's detailed personal history, but I've heard he was a goblin though. Then I guess it's no surprise that he doesn't know about the religions of the human territories, since they don't exist in the demon territories either.

「The Divine Word Religion is a religious belief worshipped widely amongst the humans. Calling the System messages the Voice of God, they promote actively raising levels and skills in order to hear it more often, or some such nonsense.」

Privately though, I attach the comment that they're the bastards who killed my parents. That's not relevant right now though, so there's no need for me to go out of my way to explain that to him, so I'll conceal it instead. Or rather, you should just be glad to have a decent explanation. To my explanation, Wrath makes an "hmm" expression and then his face seems to tighten in sudden realisation.

「Shiro-san, that doctrine is...」

To Wrath's words, goshujin-sama nods. Hey, what are you two doing ignoring me and having your own private understanding? How did you communicate between you with just that?

「Would it be possible for me to come as well?」

Goshujin-sama nods yet again. This is a nod to affirm that it's okay to come, right? Is it just me who keenly feels that a troublesome situation, has suddenly gotten even worse?

Translation notes:

Regarding -chan being “amiable”, this is a bit hard to explain, but depending upon the situation it can give a sense of close (long term) friendship. Well, not using any honorific at all on someone's given name can be considered even more intimate, depending on the situation.

Informal Conference ①

It somehow ended up with oni-kun going with the flow and also participating, but it'll work out somehow. Or rather, I've kidnapped vampire-girl who still doesn't understand the situation and teleported. Here we are at the Divine Word Religion headquarters! Like last time, we charge into the pope's office.

As if welcoming us as we arrive, the pope drops the documents in his hands, and the guard with him quickly responds, while the attendants and officials stare in shock. When I came last time he was talking with Kusama-kun so maybe he had cleared out the room for a private chat? He's normally a nice person I guess.

「A6.」

The moment the guard was about to make a move, the pope spoke.

「This is Case 3. Act according to that.」

「Yessir!」

At the pope's words the guard responds, leaving the room we're in. The pope seemed to use a code-word so I can't quite understand it, but "Case 3" probably refers to me appearing I guess? Did he predict several hypothetical cases, and practice so that they can respond to any situation? Are negotiations cancelled then?

「I would prefer it if you would not suddenly appear with teleportation, and instead come through the main entrance.」

I ignore the pope's complaint. It's not like they'd give us a warm reception if we came through the main entrance anyway. How would we explain our way through?

「This is not an appropriate place. Currently, a conference room is being prepared. Would it be acceptable to wait in an anteroom until then?」

Somehow, an implication that "you suddenly turned up so wait for a bit, since we gotta prepare as well you dolts" seems to be heard, but I'm surely just

imaging it. I nod in acknowledgement.

「Then, please come this way.」

The attendant indicated by the pope guides us. We are led to an anteroom as indicated, and drink some of the tea provided while we relax.

「Say, where is this place?」

Vampire girl is the one asking such a belated question.

「The Holy Country of Aleius. The person just now was the pope.」

The Holy Country of Aleius is the headquarters of the Divine Word Religion. And of course the pope is at the top. With just that even vampire girl should be able to comprehend the current situation I'm sure.

「Eh? What do you mean?」

Correction. It seems she's even more confused.

「Shiro-san. How much do you know about this Divine Word Religion bunch?」

In place of the rubbish vampire girl who I had been counting on, oni-kun makes a pointed comment. Really, maybe it would be better to leave the negotiations with the pope to oni-kun?

「Nearly everything.」

From the start I had known quite a bit, but I had learnt much more on top of that. I've come today to use that knowledge as a basis, and we shall see if the Divine Word Religion feel inclined to fall into step with us.

「Then, the reason why you've come this time, is for the demons and Divine Word Religion to join hands behind the scenes?」

Oni-kun makes such a good esper that it's scary. Well, I guess it's inevitable to make a bit of a leap in logic. To be precise, it's actually a preliminary step though.

「If possible.」

「In other words, depending upon these negotiations huh.」

Oni-kun understands the current situation, having a grave expression. Having come to understand just how serious a place he finds himself in, it seems like

he's braced himself. Depending on the situation, this could become a historic event where the demons and humans conspire behind the scenes after all.

「Hey! What's going on!? Explain it so that I can understand!」

Vampire girl makes a racket, but I ignore her. It was foolish of me to have expectations in her. I shall leave the negotiations to oni-kun. What will be will be. Well, vampire girl and the Divine Word Religion have a significant connection between them, so it's not meaningless for her to meet with the top guy here this one time. It's possible that if vampire girl rampages that the negotiations could be cancelled as a result, but it'll work out somehow. If it doesn't then the Demon King will just get a hole in her stomach. Also, Balto might die from overwork. It won't harm me so there's nothing to worry about.

Afterwards, while I monopolised the provided sweets, oni-kun finally managed to explain the situation to vampire girl. Somehow, I can't tell if those two are on bad terms or good terms. Well, though the situation yesterday left them on bad terms, I don't think that they are fundamentally incompatible with each other in the end. If they can face each other properly then maybe they can reconcile? I don't have any intention of doing anything bothersome like mediating between them though.

After about 30 minutes it seems the preparations are finally complete. It feels like vampire girl and oni-kun had a mutual exchange of information, but it was wise of them not to ask me anything. Those two had a pretty heated exchange of views, but to me it was mostly in one ear and out the other, so even if they asked me something I wouldn't have been able to answer. Most of all, I'm not the type to simply reply when asked anyway. I shall praise them for understanding that much about me.

We were guided by the attendant to a quite splendid conference room. Furthermore, a barrier against eavesdropping and fluoroscopy has been erected, so I can infer that the Divine Word Religion is taking this conference with thorough attitude. These guys are serious. Somehow, this makes me feel bad for turning up with half-hearted feelings. Even if you told me to get serious, all my consciousness is focused on how to manage to have a conversation at all, so concentrating on that point leaves me with no margin to consider anything else!

There's a large table placed in the center of the conference room, and I take a seat at the attendant's guidance. I peremptorily take the middle, with vampire girl and oni-kun taking seats to my side. Oh, well, whatever, I'm in the middle huh. Opposite us is the pope in the center, with various people who feel like big shots. Amongst them are a few youngsters who feel out of place. Perhaps as a representative reincarnator for the Divine Word Religion, Kusama-kun is seated while looking stiff with nervousness. He's normally like a high-spirited idiot, but I guess Kusama-kun is just a self-conscious commoner when push comes to shove. Are you going to be okay like that?

Now then, how will this go I wonder. Oni-kun, do you best!

Informal Conference ②

「Well then, while informal, let us begin the conference between the Divine Word Religion and the demons.」

At the pope's words the conference begins. For the pope to get the ball rolling, maybe he doesn't want us to gain the initiative - is that his attitude I wonder? To be honest when these sorts of exchanges in showing of all your power and the arm twisting begins, I don't understand all the finer details and customs. Well, I don't care about taking the initiative, so if he wants to advance things then I have nothing to say. Or rather, I nothing to say in general anyway.

「Let us begin with some self-introductions. I shall begin. I am the 57th pope of the Divine Word Religion, Dustin the 61st. Pleased to make your acquaintance.」

The pope's self-introduction concludes. Continuing on, all of the Divine Word Religion people give a self-introduction, but to be honest I don't have any intention to remember any of them except the pope and Kusama-kun. Though the Divine Word Religion pope is the 57th generation, the name he gave is Dustin the 61st. I wonder how many people in this world actually understand the meaning of that.

It is a declaration that, after having lived 60 times, he is experiencing his 61st life. That he is self-aware of that, that he has experienced that, that he understands the meaning of that. And on the basis of that, he named himself thus. Just by naming himself, in his name, he has the weight of 61 people. Or possibly, more than that.

「I am Sajin, a member of the d-dark ops squad diwreckly under the pope. I am a reincarnator, and my name in the previous world was Kusama Shinobu.」

Kusama-kun introduced himself with a trembling voice. Or rather, he faltered. What's "diwreckly"? I'm sure he meant to say "directly", but he clearly faltered there eh.

I hear my neighbor oni-kun mutter "Kusama?" in a quiet voice. That reminds me, I get the feeling that oni-kun and Kusama-kun were on pretty good terms.

Kusama-kun might have been a member of Natsume-kun's group, but he was the type to talk with other boys on occasion. Though I say that he was a member of Natsume-kun's group it might be better to say that he was involved with him for a long time, and wasn't the type of idiot to idolize Natsume-kun either. Kusama-kun was that type of commoner. Being in the vicinity of the most powerful person amongst the humans, his situation hasn't changed much in this world.

「That concludes our self-introductions. Can you please begin on your side, Miss Nightmare of the Labyrinth?」

Bwah!? Wha, isn't that one huge fucking bomb you just dropped there!? Well, I am aware that I am called by this slightly embarrassing chuunibyou-esque name amongst the humans, but is that something you should say right in front of the person in question!? No no, that's not the problem. How was it exposed that I'm the same entity as the Nightmare of the Labyrinth? Where did that information leak? Ugh, to actually shock me twice, what a fearsome pope! This is a whole different league to Argnar I guess. I can't be careless here.

Be cool! It's still okay. That they know shouldn't be a problem, except being a little bit embarrassing, probably! Just feign being calm.

「I call myself Shiro. Please address me as such.」

Please don't call me by a nickname like Nightmare of the Labyrinth, okay. I adamantly refuse that. Also vampire girl, why are you staring at me with such astonishment? Was it my tone? If I try even I can use a bit of polite speech you know.

「Shiro-sama then. Excuse me but, amongst the demons what kind of role might you have?」

A sharp glance from the pope. His appearance is that of a good-natured old man, but in his eyes lies a blade whose sharpness cannot be concealed. As expected of the boss of the huge religion that manipulates the whole of humanity from the shadows. He's nothing like what he seems.

Anyway, that's a troublesome question. I don't actually have any official status amongst the demons do I. If I had to say something then a relative of the Demon King? Hmm. If it was going to be like this then maybe I should have

asked for some kind of official position from the Demon King? After this is over, let's get some kind of official position. That should make it easier to take action in future anyway. Putting the future to one side, how should I answer for now huh?

「I have not come on behalf of the demons today, instead it is as one of the Administrators of the world that I am here.」

Safe! Also, a declaration that I am an Administrator! I want to praise myself for constraining the opponent while evading the attack! Hey, even I can converse if I try! When making my thoughts turn over at full power to the degree that my brain cells might explode and I might vomit blood on opening my mouth! So don't bring me up as a subject too much okay!

So as to declare my intentions to not talk any further, I urge the two to the left and right of me to do their own self-introductions. I let vampire girl and oni-kun know that I've finished my conversation by glancing at both of them. It seems that the self-introductions will start with vampire girl.

「I am Sophia Keren. A reincarnator. However, I have no intention of speaking my previous name. If pressed, maybe it would be easier if I say here that I'm the noble daughter of the ex-Earl Keren, whose home you people attacked.」

Bwah!? Even my ally is a fucking bomb dropping idiot!? Hey, you're saying that now? Erm, well, I was the one who hoped it would lead to vampire girl's growth, and for that reason brought in such an unpredictable explosive though! Please read the mood a bit more, and pick a more opportune moment for the revelations! Don't just suddenly bomb the whole area!

「I'm Wrath. I'm also a reincarnator, but like Sophia-san I intend to abstain from declaring my name from the previous world. If you really want to know then ask Kusama over there later please.」

Phew. At least oni-kun gave a safe introduction. Good, good.

「I am a "kijin" who evolved from an ogre.」

Bwah!? I don't know what oni-kun intended by saying that, but suddenly the expression of many of the Divine Word Religion people has changed!? Particularly the pope! It seems he's gone into deep thought.

Huh? Isn't this strange? Just with the self-introductions the situation has become incredibly threatening though? Am I the only one who can't foresee this conference ending in peace and tranquility?

Translation notes:

“Chuunibyou” aka “8th grader syndrome”, a rather childish “rule of cool”.

Just to be clear, when Shiro calls herself an “Administrator” this is the exact same term as used before, eg the title of chapter 120. (Don't ask me why there's not much of a reaction)

The term “kijin” has appeared before (eg Blood 27), and literally means “oni person”.

Informal Conference ③

Author's note: The pope's point of view.

Even when I tried calling her the Nightmare of the Labyrinth there was no reaction. She casually called herself Shiro. With no changes in expression, I cannot perceive her emotions. Her eyes are closed as well, so even there I cannot get any read on her. "The eyes are the windows to the soul", is a saying from Sajin's world. I thought it was a perfectly fitting phrase when I heard it. When I am talking with someone I am also looking at their eyes. That is also part of etiquette, and when someone's eyes move their emotions can be read as well. If the eyes are closed then it means that such information cannot be gained, though conversely by closing one's view it means that information that could have been gained is abandoned. Or perhaps it means that without relying on her sense of sight, that it's enough for her to use sound and the flow of air?

In any case, I wonder if Shiro-sama judges us to be worthy from her point of view? That she considers it worthwhile merely to take a seat here and to give her name and for the conference to continue? I hope so at least, but let's see.

From the white spiders drawn in that book, it was implied that Shiro-sama was related to the Nightmare of the Labyrinth. From there, when considering the specifics of the Nightmare of the Labyrinth, the natural solution could be derived. That the Nightmare of the Labyrinth was a reincarnator. Understanding that much is simple enough. Making it is possible to believe that Shiro-sama herself is the Nightmare of the Labyrinth. From the fragmentary available evidence, that much can be reasoned. So as to confirm that answer, just for that it would be worthwhile to take a seat in these discussions. We are being tested. By this girl who claims to be an Administrator.

From the contents of the book that she handed over, it is not the case that I had never considered that. However, when someone declares themselves to be an Administrator in a face-to-face meeting, it is also a fact that I suddenly had the feeling that it was unbelievable. In desperation I managed to gloss over it so that it wouldn't show in my expression, but whether it worked or not is

another matter. It's probably better to think that it did not. If it really is the case that she ascended all the way to the top with the position of Administrator, then whether her eyes are closed or not, it is certain that she can perfectly understand the events of the world. Even if that's not the case, if she has evolved from a spider monster, then it would not be at all strange for her to see the world in a different way to humans. It might be better to think that the reason why she has her eyes closed, is not because she can't see but because she doesn't need to see.

It has been quite some time since I last began a conference in such unfavourable circumstances, where the other party has already seized the initiative. It makes me recall the ones with Black Dragon-sama. I'm uncertain whether she really is an Administrator or not. Was there nothing false in the contents of the book she handed over? Determining that matter is perhaps the single most important reason for this conference. At the same time, providing that it is the whole truth, I had to impress upon the others that there was value in meeting with her just for that. If this goes badly, this conference could decide the fate of the whole of humanity. On the assumption that it is the truth, we absolutely must not offend her.

However, before this venture even began it is possible a blunder has been made. Who would have thought that both of her companions were reincarnators! In addition, that they had a non-trivial negative attitude towards the humans.

Sophia Keren. The only daughter of the former Earl Keren who was a feudal lord in the country of Sariera where the Goddess Religion is established as the state religion. The war engineered to chip away at the power of the Goddess Religion destroyed the Keren territory. Earl Keren and his wife both perished. The daughter was unaccounted for, but since even the intelligence network of the Divine Word Religion could not ascertain her fate, it was feared that she had either died long ago or had been kidnapped by the elves. But then, considering that even Black Dragon-sama raised the subject, I had thought it unlikely that she was with the elves. To think that she slipped by our information network and took shelter in the demon territory. Perhaps shortly after that war, she went to the demon territory by teleportation. Perhaps I

should consider it Black Dragon-sama's guidance? Based on her manner of speaking, she is aware that the Divine Word Religion initiated that war. I have no choice but to conclude that she has a highly negative opinion towards us.

Wrath. It is the first time that I heard his name, but I remember the rampaging ogre who caused great damage to the Empire. All the more because I had suspicions that he might be a reincarnator. The sequence of events that led to him becoming hostile to the humans is unknown, but it was impossible to discuss that matter since he had given himself up to anger. It is conjectured that he had activated the "Anger" series of skills. When the Anger skills are activated the status values increase drastically, but it has the demerit that one's reason is blown away. In repeated battles with humans, he would activate that skill, so surely he lost the ability to regain his reason. Then the Empire gave up on subjugating him, drove him towards the demon territory, and successfully forced him onto the demons. At least that should have been the case, but it seems that he was able to regain his reason somehow, and is now participating as a member of the demons in the end. Unlike Sophia-jou, it is unclear to what degree that he has a negative opinion towards the humans, with that unknown aspect being troubling. With his searching gaze, I understand that he is testing us though. I want to discuss with Sajin what sort of person he was in the past, but I obviously cannot ask in this place.

Wait. He declared with conviction that if we ask Sajin then we can learn his previous name. In other words, it means that Sajin knows who he actually is. Where did he and Sajin contact each other? But, Sajin has always been beside me. Wherever he was deployed to, we never allowed him to be alone. That being the case, what does this mean? Thinking about it, when he was an ogre, at any time did he try to go meet with Sajin thinking that he might be a reincarnator? However, Sajin reported back then that there was no opportunity to talk with him. There was nothing false in that report. The other dark ops members who were accompanying him also had identical reports. In that case, maybe it is his face? Shiro-sama's face according to Sajin was almost unchanged compared to Wakaba Hiroyuki in her previous life. Then it wouldn't be strange for Wrath-dono's face to be equally similar to his previous life perhaps? In that case, is Sophia-jou's face also similar to her previous one?

I want to confirm with Sajin, but it is not important to do so now. What is important, is the fact that Shiro-sama has brought these two with her. Since she specifically brought them, it means she has a reason for doing so.

Author's note: This took place in three seconds. How strange. The story isn't progressing at all!

Translation notes:

"Black Dragon-sama" (Kokuryuu-sama) is how the pope refers to Kuro. See the "The Pope and the Administrator" chapter.

"Sophia-jou" - is a bit like saying "Lady Sophia" or "Miss Sophia". "Wrath-dono" is sort of a male equivalent except -dono is gender-neutral normally.

Informal Conference ④

「Then, having concluded the self-introductions, let us move on to the main subject.」

After a brief gap, the pope continues the conversation. Ojii-sama, you're amazin'. You can continue the conversation in this heavy atmosphere without flinching? It would be impossible for me you know. Do your best ojii-sama, don't lose ojii-sama, I know nothing.

「Then, would it be acceptable if we both speak frankly today, about the contents of this book?」

What the pope takes out, is the book I handed over last time. Written in there is information on the current state of the world, the movements the demons will make because of that, and also information on the reincarnators as an extra bonus. Also, the most important one is a proposal about possibly building up an anti-elf collaborative organisation. What's still not in there, is my plan for saving the world. Depending on the result of the conference I might reveal it to them, but the pope will likely become an enemy in the end. In consideration for that, for the immediate future I guess it's good enough if we can cooperate purely on our common enemy - until the elves are defeated, in other words. If they reply with a "yes", then our actions will become easier, and if it's a "no" then instead our actions will become difficult. However, at worst it would just be "difficult", and it shouldn't affect the overall situation.

To the pope's words I give a slight nod. I have no intention of being frank, but I'm sure they feel the same way as well.

「Firstly, regarding a discrepancy in perception on the current situation, I shall express the opinion of the Divine Word Religion」

Hm? Discrepancy?

「According to the contents written here, it is suggested that in the near future that the world will collapse, but in the opinion of the Divine Word Religion a complete collapse is calculated to be at least 100 years away and

possibly several times that. Regarding this discrepancy, I wish to request an explanation.」

Crap. This might be a bit bad for me.

「That perception is wrong.」

「No. I do not believe it is wrong. The current MA Energy filling rate could certainly be said to be in a critical situation. Nevertheless, it should be possible to compensate for that. By the will of the Goddess Sariel-sama, who we know as the god of the Divine Word.」

I took them lightly. There is a clear difference in power between us for a start, and that regardless of the negotiations the final result would not change. Or so I thought. However, it appears that I underestimated this ojii-sama a bit too much. I never thought that he would actually have such an accurate understanding of the System. If he's grasped that much, he would be capable of understanding my plan without any discussion. However, that is dangerous. If it's this ojii-sama, then unlike even the Demon King and Administrator Kuro, he might go so far as to realise the biggest downside in my plan. That is, the massive fatalities in life across this world when the System collapses.

Precisely because of that, the pope will definitely become my enemy in the end. Although he has experience of Taboo, since he is a man who gives maximum priority to humanity's survival, it will happen. That being the case, I cannot afford to be frank about my plan here. Even if the pope realises that truth, he is still no match for me. After all, he's only a Ruler. However, it would be bad if he passed that on to Kuro. If that truth is passed on to Kuro as things are now, then if he tells me to withdraw my plan, I don't yet have the power to oppose him. Everything will fall through. I must do everything in my power to avoid that.

What to do? If I'm not able to give a somewhat satisfactory answer here, then it will breed suspicion. It's not too bad if it just means them refusing to cooperate, but what if he reaches the truth? I don't think he will, but it's scary not being certain. A bit beyond what I had assumed, this ojii-sama knows too much about many things after all.

「Excuse me. May I make a statement?」

Oni-kun raises a hand. The pope gives permission.

「Referring to what you said a short while ago, it was specifically focusing on just the MA Energy. There was no mention of the abrasion of the souls of the residents of this world.」

Damn. If oni-kun now gives further details on the state of the world to the Divine Word Religion and my expectations for the future then it might backfire. I had thought of delegating the entire conversation, but I don't want him to blurt out anything inconvenient. However, if I stop things now in a panic then it would be suspicious. If I did that, then I would definitely end up revealing that I didn't want to talk about the real facts. Certainly the pope would have enough details to be capable of reaching one step closer to the truth. But, if oni-kun talks then it would be the same thing. What should I do!?

Or rather, oni-kun, you better not be talking about this while knowing that!? Oni-kun's searching gaze, is not just pointed at the Divine Word Religion side, but is pointed at me as well. While comparing notes on the facts in the conversation with the Divine Word Religion, is he attempting to probe my true intentions then? Not good. I had thought I was bringing a reassuring ally, but maybe I've just taken upon myself an unthinkable enemy.

HELP, vampire girl! Ah, it's hopeless. She's set her eyes on glaring at the Divine Word Religion side. In a different meaning she's also dangerous!

Bleah. If I unthinkingly retaliate here it might cause an explosion. What to do? The Divine Word Religion pope at the front gate, oni-kun at the back gate. In addition vampire girl is outside the gate. This crisis has exceeded my processing capabilities, oh yeah!

Be cool! I'm still okay. Even if it's a bit bad for my image if I can keep my secrets, then I can still recover, probably.

This is a directive from the main body to the clones! From now onwards I shall commence what should be called my first serious conversation since being born! All clones are to support the main body's thinking! I repeat, the clones are to support the main body's thinking, and assist in the smooth operation of my mouth!

Muhaha. Even though I have one hundredth the communication ability of a

normal person, with over ten thousand clones joining forces I have the ability of one hundred people! Roar, my language skills! And smooth things over here!

Translation notes:

“MA Energy filling rate” - this is the same term as used in chapter 205, when Ariel said it was just 3%.

“The Divine Word Religion pope at the front gate, oni-kun at the back gate” - this is a reference to the idiom “前門の虎、後門の狼” which is equivalent to “caught between the devil and the deep blue sea” but literally translates as “tiger at the front gate, wolf at the back gate”.

Informal Conference ⑤

Author's note: Oni's point of view.

Sorry Shiro-san, but I'm going to make use of this situation. I had Sophia-san explain to me just what kind of religion the Divine Word Religion is like while we were waiting. Inferring from there, and based on the words of the old man who called himself the pope, I have concluded that the Divine Word Religion has a deep understanding of the world System. If that's the case, then I will be able to learn about the current state of the world from them.

My current information only comes from Taboo, and what Shiro-san informed me of. Even if there's nothing false in the information from Taboo, I cannot declare that there's nothing false in the information from Shiro-san. I'm currently in a valuable position to be able to ask the opinion of a third party, so I have no other option but to make use of this.

Having said that, if I give excessive preference to my self-interest, then it would be bad if that leads to a situation where Shiro-san's negotiations are undermined. It's because of Shiro-san's good will that I'm able to have my current life, and it could even be said that I owe her my life. If I incur Shiro-san's displeasure here, at best I'll face expulsion. At worst I may be killed. It would be great if I can understand Shiro-san's true intentions from this conference, but it would be bad if that results in me forfeiting my life. Somehow, while sounding out Shiro-san, I must avoid offending her, and at the same time avoid giving an advantage to the Divine Word Religion, while advancing the negotiations. This seems to be, a pretty impossible task.

In my previous life I was nothing more than a high school student, and in this world I've been more like a feral child who has spent little time in decent circumstances. Meanwhile, the opponents I have to take on, are Shiro-san who calls herself an Administrator of the world, and the head of the Divine Word Religion that is the biggest religion amongst the humans, of all things. Perhaps the degree of difficulty is a bit extreme.

To be honest, I don't even know to what degree Shiro-san will tolerate things, so it is essential to promote the negotiations carefully. Depending on the situation, I might have to abandon ascertaining Shiro-san's real intentions, and simply concentrate on the conversation with the Divine Word Religion. Well, when push comes to shove I'm sure the Divine Word Religion will support Shiro-san, so I'm not too worried. What I need to pay attention to, is how far I can probe into Shiro-san's plans. That's what I need to make sure of.

「With regards to the abrasion of the souls, to what extent does the Divine Word Religion comprehend this?」

Let's begin by pressing them in this area. I don't know to what extent the Divine Word Religion comprehends this, and what I do know only comes from the information that Shiro-san provided. What is correct, what is incorrect? I can't even determine that.

I examine Shiro-san's countenance. No change. Does this mean that it's okay for me to continue? Because Shiro-san's expression didn't change it's hard to read her.

「The Divine Word Religion has concluded that it is not in a critical situation.」

Hm? Something feels out of place in the pope's words. By that, perhaps this means that they haven't comprehend anything at all about the abrasion of the souls?

If what Shiro-san said is true, then it's possible that a large number of people have already been sent to the afterlife, from soul abrasion. At any rate, the very people I had massacred when I was imprisoned in Wrath, had been isolated for that specific reason after all. Them being isolated was said to be due to the involvement of that other person called a god, that man in black who one-sidedly beat me up. That being the case, it's highly probable that it is the truth. If that is a falsehood instead, then I can expose it by confirming it with that man in black directly. Considering the risk, there's no way that she involved someone else in a lie. Or perhaps she expected me to think that way, or perhaps she thinks I won't get the chance to meet that man in black, or perhaps that man in black is an accomplice - there's so many ways it can all be denied, but once I start doubting everything there's no end to it all.

Assuming that the story about the abrasion of the souls of the residents of this world is true, then the pope's words show a distinct lack of understanding about the current situation. With the situation getting close to the final stages as shown by the large number of humans who have already been sent to the afterlife, they are overly lacking in a sense of crisis. That being the case, maybe they are entirely ignorant of this matter then?

「Not in a critical situation, huh. Even though it is possible that over ten thousand people have already been sent to the afterlife?」

The pope's eyes begin to shake about. They become calm again in just an instant though, but the only one to manage that was the pope. The other members of the Divine Word Religion cannot conceal their discomposure.

Maybe I erred. I tossed away this perfect card in the opening round, when the Divine Word Religion had no clue. Moreover, without anything being negotiated in return.

If that's all then it's okay. The problem is, in the case where Shiro-san intentionally withheld this information from the Divine Word Religion. That would mean that I've arbitrarily handed over valuable information.

I quickly glance to the side. Shiro-san hasn't moved. In that case, am I still safe? I have not incurred Shiro-san's wrath just yet. I have not handed over some information that will undermine the negotiations. Or at least, I hope not...

To think not being able to read someone's expression would be so bad for the heart, all the more so because the person is Shiro-san.

「Is that, really true?」

Maybe he concluded that there's no use in keeping up appearances, as the pope asks in a grave voice.

「Administrator Gyuriedistodiez is involved in this matter. In his name, I shall take this occasion to swear that it is the truth.」

Instead of me, Shiro-san answers the pope's query. If that man in black's name has come up, then it surely means that it is the truth. No matter what kind of Administrator he may be, I cannot believe that he would make up such a lie to deceive us. I can also guess that from the sharp gleam in the pope's eyes.

「I wish to ask for your exact opinion. Shiro-sama, in your diagnosis, how long will this world last for?」

The pope makes the inquiry.

「It will surely collapse soon.」

To the pope's query, the reply that Shiro-san gave was quite ambiguous. Rather than giving a precise value, she said "soon". That was also the style used in the book that she handed to me. While not being a lie, it's not the full truth either. That's how the words can be taken.

「Can you not inform us of a specific value?」

It seems that the pope also thought the same way as me. While he did not use a severe tone of voice, there seemed to be an audible undertone that evading this would not be tolerated.

「You are surely laying the blame at the wrong door to ask me that.」

The pope's words, were completely dismissed.

「Please do not misunderstand, but in the first place I am an outsider to this world. While I might be lending a hand to save this world out of kindness, by all rights it you people who should be expected to resolve this no matter what. If you are getting flustered by an outsider like me informing you of the crisis at this late stage, then even if I told you that the world would end tomorrow you would surely be unable to do anything except run around like headless chickens.」

Those words seemed to be dripping with sarcasm that "can't you even notice the world in crisis when even an outsider knows?"

Translation notes:

Just to be clear about one thing - everyone is speaking using polite speech styles. The pope is generally being both polite and humble in his speech.

Informal Conference ⑥

Author's note: The pope's point of view.

If you are going to treat my kindness with disdain then I have no obligation to cooperate. At hearing that undertone in her words, I realise my own mistake. I said it myself did I not? To speak frankly. Those words themselves are an insult, and that resulted in Shiro-sama's response expressing her distrust. If that's the case, then it means that we have led her to this judgement. That we are not worth cooperating with.

That must be avoided at all costs. Since Black Dragon-sama's name was used, that means that Shiro-sama is acquainted with that great personage at the very least. Whether Shiro-sama herself is an Administrator or not is still unclear, but just with her being connected to a genuine Administrator it means that it cannot be flatly rejected.

In addition, the world is in a far more serious condition than we had estimated. As to what kind of phenomenon this "abrasion of the soul" is, I can only guess since I have not had a detailed explanation, but I can estimate to a certain degree. Since it is the case that Black Dragon-sama is participating, the importance must be high. Dangerously high. Enough that Shiro-sama implied that she was annoyed why us residents of this world had not even noticed.

It is no longer appropriate to sound out her true intentions. The request this time was for cooperation in countermeasures against the elves. We were not requested for cooperation relating to the world crisis. To Shiro-sama in other words, that's probably all that the Divine Word Religion amounted to. That as for the world salvation actions that Shiro-sama mentioned taking herself, she sees no need for the cooperation of the Divine Word Religion. That was the case from the start. To misunderstand that, was our own failure in overestimating the position of the Divine Word Religion. I cannot allow for trust in the Divine Word Religion to fall any further. With barely any left, we would risk losing clues to the salvation of the world.

「That's an unbridled tongue you have there.」

The one who opened his mouth, was the general who supervises the Divine Word Religion's armies. Before he can open his mouth again, I interject.

「Restrain yourself, general.」

At the words "restrain yourself" the expression on the proud face of the general, and also the words the general were going to say next, suddenly change.

「Eh?」

「I am telling you to restrain yourself. If the negotiations with these people fail, then understand that it will not be settled with just your own head.」

With the exception of the general, I check everywhere for those showing offense at Shiro-sama's statement. While at it, I appeal to them that I value these negotiations with Shiro-sama with that much seriousness. To be honest, what the general has done might be too deep to recover from. At the general's words, Shiro-sama might turn her back on us. If that's really what happened, then not just the general's head, I might have to offer the heads of his entire family to determine if Shiro-sama's mood can be appeased. While the general has a short temper, he is a comrade who has fought beside me continuously until now. I cannot afford to lose him here.

「My colleague has been rude. If you have been offended I shall eject him from the room.」

At my humble actions, it appears that the other members finally appreciate that the person that they are facing off against is far superior to themselves. Even though I had given such detailed instructions in advance, they had never confronted an existence above my own in importance before, so perhaps it did not feel real.

「It is tolerable.」

A short phrase. It makes no difference if he's there or not. That's what her words seemingly ensued.

Shiro-sama shows no indication of leaving her seat. It seems she has judged us to be just about still worth exchanging words with. In that case, there still

remains a chance to recover. From here no failures can be excused. I must pay meticulous attention to my remarks.

「By Shiro-sama's words I have come to realise my own worthlessness. Therefore, in our worthlessness, we wish to receive assistance from Shiro-sama. I am fully aware of the presumptuousness of this request, but may we please implore this for your consideration?」

Even if it is small cooperative relationship at first, it can be built up from there. If the negotiations break down here, the Divine Word Religion will be left one or two steps behind in the state of the world's affairs. If we are able to build up a cooperative relationship, then there will be the opportunity to gain trust. In that case, it will become possible to learn about more profound subjects.

Beginning with cooperation intended to defeat the elves. To be honest, if it is possible to defeat the elves who are protected by a barrier that we can't even touch, then that would be a most ideal proposal. Defeating the elves would be positive for both the Divine Word Religion and for the world and nothing negative. That being so, I would unconditionally approve of cooperating towards that.

Apart from that, I can only search for ways in which to earn Shiro-sama's trust. Whether or not we can earn her trust, will depend on our performance from now on.

「For today I am content to hear that alone. For the time being, showing efforts to move in step, that is acceptable for you, correct?」

「Yes. We shall definitely be of use to you.」

I answered instantly. From Shiro-sama's words, it can be inferred that there will be no further discussion today. There are many things that I would like to discuss further, but there's no help for it. Before this conference began, there was no option for us remaining other than to answer "yes". So long as the answer is "yes", there is nothing else to say to Shiro-sama. It may have been possible to discuss things in further detail, but there's no point dwelling upon that. Though the negotiations did not break down, it's hard to call them a success. Rather, it is better to consider them as being one step short of failure.

We only just managed to avoid being abandoned. I cannot shake that impression.

「Then, let's prepare for an occasion soon to compare and adjust our future plans.」

Summing up like that, Shiro-sama prepares to leave her seat.

「Wait.」

That was stopped by Sophia-jou.

「My side isn't done yet though?」

It seems that this seat will continue. And also, in an unfavourable direction.

Translation notes:

The pope starts using very humble speech about halfway through. Something like an underling in a period drama talking to a feudal lord or the shogun or the emperor.

Informal Conference ⑦

Author's note: Vampire girl's point of view.

I have no family. It could be said that Merazofis is close to being that, but he and I are not related biologically. I have no family related by blood. If you want to know why, it's because they were killed by the Divine Word Religion.

It's possible that the grandparents that I met once are still alive, but even if I met them now I don't think I would have the sensation of them being blood relatives. Even for my real parents, they felt like strangers to me who has reincarnated, so I didn't have the sensation of them being blood relatives.

Even still, my real parents, did love me. Without the war, if peace had continued, I would probably have been able to live happy with those gentle parents. Merazofis wouldn't have become a vampire either, and Noiria who fell victim when I escaped would probably still be alive as well. It's not just Noiria either. There were many servants in the mansion who also resolved themselves to approach their final moments together with my parents.

If only there had not been a war, then surrounded by that town, by that mansion, by those parents and servants, hiding the fact that I was a vampire, I could have lived as a normal human. I might have had such a future.

I can no longer cast away the vampire side of myself. However, if I had had a different future, I think I would have also had the opportunity to live as a human. With my meagre powers of imagination, I don't know whether or not I would have been happy though.

Even still, that doesn't change the fact that I had one of my possible futures stolen from me. Until now the idea of countries waging war with each other, has just been too big in scale for me to understand who to blame. I cannot deny that I channelled those murky feelings into dissatisfaction towards goshujin-sama. I had to do that, so that I could sort out the black emotions swirling within me.

That way, my emotions have become settled after much time. However, right

in front of me, is the one who caused it all. This nothing like the fits of anger that I've vented at goshujin-sama. Here is the undisputed ringleader behind the war. The one who killed my parents, stole my home, and stole my future.

「Why, did you cause a war in the country of Sariera?」

Restraining the urge to kill that seems about to overflow, I ask that. Until now, I had been under the impression that the war had been caused due to a religious dispute. However, from today's conference, and from the arguments I'd had with Wrath beforehand, I have now realised that the Divine Word Religion is no ordinary religious organisation.

My question is precisely because I've realised that. Why was it necessary to cause a war at that time?

After all, a mere religious dispute, is of no value to the Divine Word Religion. The Divine Word Religion merely has the form of a religious organisation, while in practice they're a group that is working to save the world. While just saying that certainly makes them sound like a religious organisation, they're not simply waiting to be saved while praying to god. They're putting in their own effort, working towards solving the problem themselves.

So for the Divine Word Religion, I don't understand their reason for trying reduce the Goddess Religion's power. After all, a religious war is always something that becomes a quagmire. It should be more like if the Divine Word Religion wanted the war to be lengthened, and for many trained soldiers to be killed, it should be a development they would desire. Instead, in that war, the Divine Word Religion was clearly working towards reducing the power of the Goddess Religion. Even though it should have been more convenient for the Divine Word Religion to let the Goddess Religion have power to some extent.

The intent wasn't just to reduce their power a bit. The reason why I believe that, is because back when Ariel-san had saved me, she clearly said that the Divine Word Religion intended to crush the Goddess Religion. For her to assert it that strongly, I think she must have had a pretty good basis for that.

What I remember about it, was Ariel-san saying that the war was a "course of events in the world that couldn't be helped". She added, that it was important to decide what I would do the next time. I was a baby back then, so I couldn't

do anything. What Ariel-san had said, was that it was important to decide whether I would fight or give up the next time something similar happened. Then, I had answered. That I would “fight”.

Since that time, I have gotten extremely strong, going by my status values. Enough that, I believe that I can easily handle everyone in this place, except for goshujin-sama and Wrath. Depending on the pope’s answer, I don’t know what will happen.

「The Goddess Religion professes faith in the Goddess. Within that is a truth that the ordinary people cannot be allowed to know. In order to crush that, it must be destroyed together with the Goddess Religion. Well, saying that, I’m sure that there are high ranking members of the Divine Word Religion who are not here that also think that.」

At the pope’s words, I unconsciously blinked my eyes. My parents were killed for such a reason then? At which, the emotions I had braced myself for, suddenly deflated at the anticlimax.

「That was one of the objectives, but the core of it was a different matter.」

As if to prod my deflated emotions, the pointed words of the pope burst into my ears. At the weight loaded into his voice, I was unexpectedly surprised.

「We of the Divine Word Religion, in preparation for the passing on of the Goddess-sama, have decided to crush the Goddess Religion in advance of that.」

A shiver, suddenly runs down my spine. The determination in the pope’s words. And, a faint feeling of anger next to him. Sensing both of those, I couldn’t speak.

「If things continue as they are, it will become necessary for the Goddess-sama to supplement the wasting away MA Energy. If that happens, then it is as clear as anyone can see, that the personage who has been supporting the System and continuously supporting this world, will surely exceed the limits of her body. Thus, it is expected that the Goddess-sama has little of her life span remaining. In addition, that after the Goddess-sama passes on, that Black Dragon-sama will take over her position as well.」

Wrath gives a start of surprise and looks at goshujin-sama’s face. Ignoring

Wrath's reaction, goshujin-sama continues to look at the pope. With her eyes closed, but in a serious manner.

「If Black Dragon-sama becomes a living pillar for the System, then the voice of the Divine Word that we revere, will of course also change from the Goddess-sama's to Black Dragon-sama's. At that time, the Divine Word Religion will surely face a great storm. We must prepare for that time. So that we can safely announce the substitution of the gods.」

The Divine Word Religion's creed is that the System Messages are the Voice of God, and that people should make efforts to hear that voice. If that Voice of God suddenly changes, that will be capable of shaking the very foundation of the Divine Word Religion, and become a major event. No matter how they work to avoid it, suspicion towards the Divine Word Religion will sprout. It is understandable to prepare for that. However, how is that related to destroying the Goddess Religion?

「In order to minimize the chaos, this will be necessary no matter what. If the Goddess-sama passes on from this world, that truth will have to be announced. Therefore, the Goddess Religion that worships the Goddess, must be forced into decline.」

The pope continued. That it's because people might lose the will to live otherwise.

Translation notes:

Sophia is referring to the "Blood 12" chapter when considering the past. Noiria dies in "Blood 8".

Informal Conference ⑧

Author's note: Oni's point of view.

「Please wait a moment. From what you are saying, the Goddess Religion will come to know that the Divine Word's god and the Goddess are the same being. However, that will not necessarily happen though?」

To be honest, I had no intention of cutting into the conversation, but I raised that question without thinking. Before the conference I had heard just a bit about the Goddess from Sophia-san. She had only heard about the Goddess Religion in a short period when she was a baby though, so she's not well-informed about the doctrine. However, just from the name alone I can guess that they worship the Goddess. So unlike the Divine Word Religion, they don't know that the Divine Word's god and the Goddess are the same being either.

From the pope's words, it's as though it's being suggested that it will naturally become common knowledge. Otherwise, even if the Divine Word's god changed over, it should not be synonymous with the death of the Goddess.

「I am sure it will. Because we plan to make it common knowledge.」

To my question, the pope readily answered. What does he mean?

「Well, I am sure there are many things that you want to ask, but for now please listen to what I have to say. Starting from our conclusion, at the time when the Goddess-sama has died, so that the power relationship between the Divine Word Religion and the Goddess Religion will not reverse, the power of the Goddess Religion must weaken as soon as possible, or otherwise the Divine Word Religion will inevitably be absorbed by them. Dragging Sophia-jou's hometown into war could be called one of the steps for that.」

Many things have been skipped over, but it seems that is the conclusion.

「In other words, it means you're afraid of losing your own social position huh?」

Sophia-san asks the pope that question in a low voice.

「If you think that, then I shall offer up my head immediately. If that will appease your enmity, I would be happy to approve of such an agreement.」

For an instant, I was not able to understand the meaning of those words. I could probably say the same for nearly everyone in this place. After a delayed pause the Divine Word Religion members in the room had a startled expression, and Sophia-san exposed a stupid looking expression of blank amazement. Only Shiro-san showed no change in expression.

「What is the matter? I shall not resist. Please feel free to go ahead without further ado.」

In the pope's calm tone of voice, there was no sense of him saying it in jest. It gives the feeling that he really is willing to offer his head right here. A strange hush fills the room.

「Just what, are you planning?」

After a while, Sophia-san finally squeezes that out in a hoarse voice.

「I am not planning anything, I have always resolved myself to submit my life at any time, that is all.」

The ones who responded to those words, was not Sophia-san, but the other Divine Word Religion members. Various lines such as “it would be troubling for you to not be here”, “cut out this foolishness”, “if you are going to offer your head then take mine instead” were thrown at the pope and Sophia-san. Those words are ignored by Sophia-san and the pope respectively, and continue to stare at each other without moving. The pope's unwavering gaze proves his seriousness.

「Do you think I'd let you die painlessly?」

「It matters not to me. To me, death is merely a waypoint. No matter how many times I die, no matter how many times I am reborn, no matter how many times I lose my memory, I shall never deviate from my path.」

「If you die here, wouldn't you become thrown from that path?」

「Even if I am not here the Divine Word Religion will continue to function. This place has been nurtured in order for that to happen. I do not believe that this organisation would falter, merely at the removal of one human.」

Sophia-san grinds her teeth. The pope's determination is the real deal. For the sake of forging the pact, he is willing to die in this place without hesitation. That is, an indirect way of indicating that he would not stubbornly cling to his position and authority, I guess. For a human who would be readily willing to offer his own life as a bargaining chip, there is no way that he would stubbornly cling to something minor like his position.

「If the Goddess-sama passes away, and Black Dragon-sama replaces her, the authority of the Divine Word Religion will surely be diminished by no small amount. At that time, we cannot allow even a small chance for the Goddess Religion to come to prominence. Precisely because we can crush them at any time, it is permissible for the Goddess Religion to continue to exist, but what we cannot allow is for them to replace the Divine Word Religion as humanity's largest sect. Not to a sect that would offer prayers to a departed god, and with no understanding of the System.」

The pope argues strongly but without passion.

「As for clinging to my position, I cannot deny that. If the Divine Word Religion falls, I believe that would lead to both the humans and the world being one step closer to ruin. It does not matter what happens to me personally, but I cannot allow the Divine Word Religion to fall. All the more so if the Goddess Religion takes over, given how they have forgotten the Goddess-sama's ideals and become distorted.」

Regarding the Goddess Religion, I am not that knowledgeable. However, within the pope's words, there was a faint disgust mixed in, but I'm sure it's just my imagination.

「Until this moment and from this moment the Divine Word Religion, for the sake of the world, and consequently to protect the humans, shall move to action. If, it becomes a matter for the humans over the Divine Word Religion, then I would be glad to concede my position. But, if it is something that is judged to be negative to the humans, then I would not hesitate for an instant to remove it.」

In the end, what motivates this pope, is that judgement. For the humans. For that reason he would discard self-interest, or possibly even discard his own life,

and even when he's reborn he persists with that judgement.

「Even if it was someone who should protect the humans?」

「When a small number must be killed so that a large number can live, I will kill the small number without hesitation. When weighing up whether the Divine Word Religion should survive or whether the Goddess Religion should survive, on determining which would benefit the humans the most, I chose to kill the Goddess Religion. That is all there is to it.」

Sophia-san asked in a trembling voice, while the pope replied immediately and without hesitation.

「Slaughtering the people you should protect, what a joke.」

Like a poor loser, she spat out those words about a joke without smiling.

「That is precisely the reason why I must avoid piling up a mountain of corpses for no reason.」

At those words, I felt a mental shock like I had been struck in the head.

「I will not stop until both my body and even my soul are worn away. If the world can be saved before then, I am prepared to make my endless apologies in hell. Therefore, I beg you to please forgive me for now.」

I am terribly sorry. I killed your parents, took away your home and cost you your future.

On hearing those words, Sophia-san weakly looked up towards the heavens.

Informal Conference ⑨

At the end of the day, the weakening of the Goddess Religion as per the Divine Word Religion's intentions, was a subject that couldn't be avoided. While the Divine Word Religion wants skills and status to be raised for the sake of the System, at the same time it is spreading a network throughout the humans, and has been putting in efforts in order to stabilise the world. Reducing the damage to the whole of humanity as much as possible, simultaneously has the meaning of being a countermeasure towards the demons. That was a major reason why the demons struggled to conquer the humans, in spite of the demons having higher status values. Controlling them so that large-scale wars amongst the humans would not break out, their built-up stress was forced onto the demons instead. That is the sort of detailed manipulation of people's opinions and information being deployed to manage the whole of humanity.

However, if the Goddess dies, that influence will collapse. Should the Voice of God actually change, for the Divine Word Religion that places that at the heart of its doctrine, that's surely a huge problem that cannot be avoided. No matter what, it's unavoidable for people's faith to be shaken. If many humans then convert to the Goddess Religion, it would be possible for a reversal of fortunes to occur.

The Goddess Religion is not as skilled as the Divine Word Religion in dialogue capable of commanding public opinion, nor as skilled in managing information. If the Divine Word Religion sent a covert operative into the Goddess Religion, and then properly trained up a successor to the Divine Word Religion then that would probably be a different matter, but if they can put in that much time and effort, it would be easier to simply crush the Goddess Religion and allow the Divine Word Religion to continue. More than anything, the Goddess Religion does not understand the System. So installing the Goddess Religion in their place, is surely something that the pope could not countenance.

Originally, it was expected that the death of the Goddess would be much much further in the future. But then, because a certain someone used

manipulation to cause a waste of MA Energy in an attack on that measly D, it caused a precipitous shortening of her lifespan. Most likely, the Divine Word Religion had intended to cause the gradual decline of the Goddess Religion, over many more months and years. Instead, there was a change in plans, as the situation had become severe enough that they had to quickly reduce the Goddess Religion's power even if it meant war.

In advance of the death of the Goddess, the Divine Word Religion has been steadily advancing their preparations. Part of that has involved information manipulation. So that there won't be chaos even if the System's voice changes, they are already spreading rumours that indirectly suggest that the voice could change. Those rumours are steadily disseminating, and when they have spread through the population, those rumours will even be supplemented with legends to give them a trace of authenticity. For example, the Goddess has become pregnant and her husband is taking over her duties until childbirth. Anyhow, without making a statement on the Goddess of the Goddess Religion when doing so, I'm sure they'd make a declaration that the god of the Divine Word is the Goddess. There's probably people who would notice that anyway.

Even if that isn't the whole truth, there is no way for ordinary members of the public to verify that. If the Divine Word Religion are able to make the announcement in advance, then when the Voice of God does change it would give them credibility. Even with just that the collapsing of their authority would probably be considerably reduced.

However, in that case doesn't that mean they have no reason to crush the Goddess Religion? Maybe, but it's not so simple. Even within the Goddess Religion, there are those who regard the god of the Divine Word and the Goddess as having the same voice. Just with the voice changing like the pope said, there wouldn't be many humans who make the leap of logic to the Goddess having died. So I think that there wouldn't really be any humans who despair and lose the power to live from that. However, with regards to the god of the Divine Word and the Goddess as having the same voice, that presents an opportunity that is capable of causing the Goddess Religion's authority to collapse instead. I'm sure this pope would be capable of doing that much. However, he wouldn't do that. He wouldn't have the time.

For the Goddess to have died, that means his back would already be to the wall after all. The reason why the Goddess Religion hasn't been crushed yet despite having an inconvenient truth in its doctrine, is solely because it's convenient as a hypothetical enemy. Or otherwise, maybe the pope has some kind of lingering sympathy for the Goddess. Making it painful to crush a religion that worships the Goddess.

Lumping all those expectations together, the death of the Goddess would involve the world in a major event. While there's already not a moment to waste, there's no spare time to deal with the political and ideological complications of the Goddess Religion. That's why, he had to crush them during this time.

Even for the Divine Word Religion, it certainly must have been very difficult to accelerate the plan for the destruction of the Goddess Religion by several centuries. Then I, who at that time was seriously called the Nightmare of the Labyrinth, casually turned up and was used as a pretext to take advantage of the situation. Well, now that I think about it, I guess it couldn't be helped huh. Back then even I didn't really understand what the Divine Word Religion was about, and went around tearing up the battlefield in a fit of rage after all. So-o-o sorry!

According to the Divine Word Religion they are still going ahead with crushing the Goddess Religion. It wouldn't be called a war, but in order to reduce the national power of the country of Sariera, they have been increasingly isolating them diplomatically. The current situation is that they're waiting for the country of Sariera to lose patience and attack. When that happens they'll be crushed right away, and even if they don't then their ideology will be gradually rewritten. To achieve that, war orphans and the children of poor people are being adopted in secrecy, and being trained in the Divine Word Religion's style.

While I think it's dirty, the pope won't change his chosen path. Even if he has to create 10,000 corpses, then so long as it will save 10,001 people, he will implement that without hesitation. That is the man known as Pope Dustin. Recognised even by the Demon King, the monster amongst the humans. In a sense, even more than Kuro or the Demon King.

It is not possible to force this man to change his will. Unless you thoroughly

prepare a path of no return for his will, then negotiations themselves are impractical. The subject of the negotiations this time was the anti-elf collaboration. Therefore, the chances of him agreeing were high.

However, we ended up being obliged to surrender more of our intelligence than expected, and it had felt like the talks were deadlocked. Since it's also painful for me to talk on and on, once we simply had an agreement on the collaboration towards the elves, just when I was about to scarp immediately, this time it was vampire girl who screwed up. I seriously thought she might knock the pope's block off.

Well, if that's the case then it would save me the effort of dealing with him in the future though, so for me that was all OK. The end result, was a KO loss for vampire girl. For a mere young girl who is wavering over how she should live her life, it was painfully obvious she would have no chance against this ojii-sama though. He's a monster of ideology who could even be called the Will of Humanity you know.

「I have clearly witnessed your determination.」

Vampire girl has frozen, so I'll redo that declaration to leave that failed just earlier.

「I hope we shall be able to develop a beneficial relationship going forwards. I shall come again another day.」

Allright! Let's leave!

「Please wait.」

What da heck! Don't stop me! I wanna go already!

「For the invasion of the demons, is that decided?」

「Indeed.」

「Whenabouts will it be?」

「As soon as the preparations are complete.」

LET-ME-LEAVE!

「Very well. When do you expect to visit us again?」

「In ten days, at the same time.」

「Then, we shall prepare and wait in that regard. For making time in your schedule for today, you have my sincere gratitude.」

「Likewise, for your cordial reception in spite of our sudden arrival, thank you. Then...」

A bow of the head, and this time for sure teleportation is activated. Their barrier? It's irrelevant!

I toss vampire girl and oni-kun into a suitable location in the mansion, and I teleport again. I've come to another dimension. Just for me, another dimension with nobody else.

I'm worn out. I'm totally worn out. I want to simply do nothing for a while here, without having to meet anybody. Or rather, I shall. When I think that I'll have to go through the same thing again in ten days, it makes me so melancholic I could die. I feel like I want to spend the next ten days doing nothing here.

Translation notes:

“So-o-o sorry!” - Shiro literally says “mengo mengo”, which is a corruption of saying “gomen gomen” (sorry sorry). Basically, a very insincere apology.

“KO loss” - just to be clear, this means a “knockout loss” - ie, if the verbal battle between Sophia and the pope was a boxing match, he would have totally dominated and won by a knockout.

“I have clearly witnessed your determination” - this line from Shiro to the pope might sound a bit strange but it's a somewhat archaic turn of phrase in Japanese. It's a bit like giving someone a pat on the head (as a compliment) but dressed up in noble language.

“What da heck!” - Shiro says “nanyanen” here (short for “nandeyanen”) which is a typical tsukkomi in the kansai dialect. “What the heck” is a pretty literal translation.

Informal Conference - Hidden

Author's note: The pope's point of view.

I left the tidying up of the conference room to others, and headed towards my private room. I closed the door, confirmed that I was alone, then I sat down in a chair as if collapsing. My legs begin to shake, rather too late. I heave a massive sigh.

No matter how many times I experience it, I am still unused to the fear of death. I managed to survive this time, but I wonder what will happen in ten days time.

I am scared of death. But, beyond that, what really makes me anxious is if the world was destroyed while I was not around. At the conference I had boasted that it would be okay even if I wasn't around, and in practice I'm sure the Divine Word Religion would not shake without me. Even still, I cannot shake the anxiety about something happening while I was not around.

I stimulated my shaking knees, then stood up, and picked up a particular wine bottle from the shelf. Normally I restrain myself, but I'm sure it is acceptable to open this after a day like today. That shows just how much I was cornered in mind and body by that short conference.

「Could you prepare two glasses?」

On turning around at the voice I suddenly heard, there was Black Dragon-sama elegantly sitting on a chair.

「It sure seems that even the likes of you, would be considerably terrified by that.」

「Peeping is hardly laudable.」

As I smoothly turned aside his jest with my honest opinion, Black Dragon-sama's sweet smile became deeper. I swallowed a sigh before it could escape, prepared two glasses and sat down facing Black Dragon-sama. On pouring the wine I handed over a glass to Black Dragon-sama, and then poured my own

glass.

「Well then, cheers!」

A sound resounded as we lightly tapped the two glasses together. I tipped the glass and poured the wine into my mouth, bringing stimulation to my aged throat. My first drink in a long time, seems to have been a bit too powerful a stimulus for my aged body.

「What did you think of that?」

For a while I silently concentrated on my glass, and Black Dragon-sama asked me that while pouring a second glass for himself.

「I do not know.」

I spoke that honestly. At the conference today, regarding that girl named Shiro who called herself an Administrator, I was not able to comprehend anything at all. As for what kind of personality she has, I could not even make a conjecture, and instead it was I who was being tested. The words she said at the end, “I have clearly witnessed your determination”, conveyed that truth more than anything. The one testing and the one being tested. It was like the manifestation of our power relationship right then and there.

「That figures. Even I don't really understand that.」

Black Dragon-sama seemed to be in a good humour, smiling while swirling the wine.

「What that person said about being an Administrator, is it the truth?」

「It feels a bit unfair for me to reveal it, but very well. That is unmistakably an Administrator. Enough that she is even deeper into the System than me.」

While consenting to Black Dragon-sama's words, at the same time I feel my tiredness increase.

「For that Administrator to take personal action, does it mean that the situation is that bad?」

「It's bad indeed.」

Black Dragon-sama casually announced that, and put his hands on a third glass.

「However, don't be so pessimistic about it. Will that succeed, or will I disappear instead? At the end of the day, those are the only two possibilities. While that proceeds according to the scenario she prepared, all I have to do is just pretend that I don't know anything.」

When Black Dragon-sama said he might disappear, he indicated that he found that possibility to be pleasant somehow.

「You are okay with that?」

「With what?」

「About you becoming the next living pillar for the System.」

「Ahh. About that.」

「Indeed. After the Goddess-sama has passed on, you would lose your reason for staying in this world, surely. Much less to succeed in Goddess-sama's role as well.」

「I've said this before, but after coming so far, it would be harder for me to abandon everything instead. Sariel would probably not wish for me to abandon things either. Besides, in a world without Sariel, there is no merit for me to be alive. In that case, to use this life of mine at the last for the sake of the world that Sariel loved, is not bad either.」

Even though he's saying things here and there that worry me, even if I questioned him about it I'm sure this person would not talk about it. This person will not rely upon anyone. There has been nobody who would stand with him. Also, there has been nobody who he can depend upon. For these reasons, he is all alone. I don't have the capabilities to stand with him either.

Perhaps that is why. For Black Dragon-sama to be in an unusually good mood. Because an existence that is worthy of standing beside him has appeared.

「That is fascinating. Do you know how that secretly refers to me?」

「Well now, I cannot even imagine.」

「"Loser"」

Dear me. To refer to an existence at the top of this world as "loser". Is that audacious or what. Compared to the calm and neat image she had at the conference, that sounds like coming from a completely different person.

「I do have the self-awareness that being called so is inevitable. I have

continued to avoid making choices. For that reason, I've lost the right to make choices after all this time. I will simply proceed according to the prepared scenario. Will that complete her scenario, or will she stumble along the way and fail? I shall watch to the end. Whatever the outcome may be I won't mind.」

At Black Dragon-sama's words, it can be inferred that Shiro-sama may accomplish something greater than I had thought. In addition, by telling that to me, he is likely indirectly indicating to me that I should not get in the way.

「In this scenario you mentioned, I can only pray that it is not something that will bring harm to the humans.」

With my response the matter is settled. Even if Black Dragon-sama is trying to warn me, if it is something that goes against the sake of humanity, then I cannot abide by it. I have already lost the right to make such choices. The choice to take an action that goes against the sake of humanity that is.

「I see. It's been a treat.」

Before I knew it, the contents of the wine bottle had gone. I have only taken a single gulp from my first glass. It seems that the majority has been drunk by Black Dragon-sama. When I had noticed that fact, he had already vanished from the seat in front of me.

Translation notes:

So yes, Kuro refers to Shiro as "that". It could be considered rude but within the context maybe it implies a sense of mystery or wonder or otherness.

"Loser" - the word used here is "hetare", which generally means something like "loser". It can also mean "incompetent", "lazy", "good-for-nothing", "weakling". Shiro used this word to describe Kuro in chapter 255 - her little Q&A with Wrath.

Oni 16 - Justice?

「That is precisely the reason why I must avoid piling up a mountain of corpses for no reason.」

The pope's words still reverberate in my ears. That old man, abiding by his own unshakable will, has continued to kill the very people he should protect by his own hands. So that the many will live the few will be killed. He has the will and power to implement that, without even hesitating for an instant.

To murder is wrong. Doubts like "how?" and "why?" have no point. The reason why to murder people is wrong, is not something that can be explained by theory. What must not be done must not be done. That's all there is to it. Not because of some theory, but the reason why people are people is precisely because they avoid such actions.

However, then, what if you had to do what must not be done because you had people you wanted to protect? What if despite knowing that it must not be done, that there was no other available option?

What the pope is doing, are actions to transform the way the world should be for his own convenience. However, it is not being pursued for his own personal benefit, but out of genuine concern for the world. For the sake of the world, denying himself, even while sacrificing many, he is saving even more people.

Are such actions, an act of justice? Or are they, an act of evil?

Trying to save someone is surely an act of justice. To kill someone is surely an act of evil. In the case when it's both of them, then how on earth do you determine the correct interpretation?

I don't know. Is that something right, or is that something wrong?

However, there is one thing that I do understand. That for that pope, even if you try to tell him to his face that it is wrong, I'm sure he will still not waver from his path. While having that gentle expression on his face, that old man harbours in his eyes a conviction that borders on insanity. No matter what happens, I can declare that he will not stop. If he does happen to stop, I'm sure

it would be as he himself said, only when the world is saved, or otherwise when his body and soul fall into ruin.

Is the path the pope has chosen right, or is it wrong? For the sake of argument, even if he made a mistake, I'm sure he would use that as a source of motivation to stand up once again. Until his body and soul fall into ruin.

He's terrifying. That belief that goes to extremes, is not something expressed in status values or skills, an absurd power. If we fought directly I would surely win. However, that victory would totally meaningless. Even if he dies he will rise up once again. Again and yet again. There is nobody with a more unyielding heart.

What about me then? In that sense, I'm terribly weak. To the extent that I briefly wished for death, being unable to tolerate the crimes I committed myself. In spite of that, once I was saved I didn't want to die, that's just how wretched my feelings are, and how weak I am.

My status values and skills, are probably high even at a global level. Although I have been made to realise that there is always someone better than you, even still I'm well above the average. Despite the power that I hold, my heart is far too weak. I'm unbalanced.

I have got to get stronger as well. Unlike that pope, I cannot reach the level of his madness, nor do I think I can even aim for it. Even still, I will take responsibility for the path I have taken to get here, and I must take actions to make the most of it. That is, the line I will draw for myself. For the weak-hearted me, that is the excuse I will use to forgive myself.

My status has already fully recovered. It is time that I stopped idling in this mansion. I must take action. From now on, I must also find out, just how the world should be.

I will talk to Shiro-san. To ask Shiro-san where she is heading to. To ask what methods she will use to reach there.

If that overlaps with my own path, then I will gladly cooperate with Shiro-san. If it's not, then... I shall pray that it's not.

At the time when I had made that resolution, even though it was mealtime, it

was unusual for Shiro-san to have not returned. Instead, like a shadow of her true self, Sophia-san was sitting here having barely touched her food.

I think she is probably also wondering about many different things from meeting with the pope. What's on her mind is likely so mixed up that I couldn't even guess.

She was originally born in a country that followed the Goddess Religion, and I heard that her hometown was destroyed by the Divine Word Religion. I had also experienced my goblin village being destroyed by humans, so I can well understand her feelings. That fury, strong enough that you could forget yourself in anger and hatred.

In my case I achieved revenge by my own hands. However, Sophia-san cannot do that. It's not that she can't even try, but more like that she won't. Because, she realised just how determined the pope was in that conference. Nevertheless, having seen his unstoppable belief, I'm sure even Sophia-san would realise that it would have been totally meaningless to kill the pope in that place.

Is revenge an act of justice? I don't know that. However, because I have experienced it myself, what I do understand is that without achieving revenge it is not possible to move on.

To this day, Sophia-san has lived without being able to achieve revenge. Isn't it precisely because of that, that she has easily crossed over the line that people should not cross, and run down the path of injustice? The flames of revenge that remain in her heart, might have warped Sophia-san's personality. I've come to think that way.

And now, if she tries to confront him as a target for revenge, she knows that she won't be able to achieve revenge no matter what. Normally she would be able to gain satisfaction from sending him to his death. However, that pope is an exception. Even if he's killed, there's no meaning in it. If you want to achieve revenge against him, it will be necessary to break his spirit. I'm sure that Sophia-san also realises, just how difficult that would be.

While still barely having touched her food, Sophia-san stands up.

「How about you eat a bit more?」

I called out to her totally without thinking. Totally, out, I think. Because in Sophia-san's eyes, I saw an unconcealable irritation.

Blood 33 - Previous Life And Current Life

Of all things just what is this guy saying? “How about you eat a bit more!?” Just the other day, the same mouth of his utterly denied my own food. He has got to be joking.

No, I do understand, really. It’s that this guy simply doesn’t understand anything. He doesn’t appreciate that for a vampire, that eating food basically means the consumption of blood.

But, you know. From that mouth of his that has even called me an atrocity, isn’t it reasonable that I can’t help but think that he doesn’t get what he’s saying when he tells me to eat more food?

While I stare at him in silence, Wrath makes an expression that seems a bit flustered. However, I bet that he doesn’t get the reason why I’m irritated.

「“Eat more”? As in, telling me to “suck blood” huh? Though you called me an atrocity the other day?」

While looking at the stupid face that Wrath is making, those words rushed out unintentionally from deep within myself. On seeing Wrath react to that in downright panic, I feel a bit better.

「Or is it that, by saying that, you are offering me your blood? After all, by telling me not to use hypnotism, aren’t you telling me to gain the other person’s consent? Nobody would do such a whimsical thing though, right?」

Taking the opportunity, I rained sarcasm down on him. It’s generally the case that I can’t win verbal arguments. However, since he’s just dug his own grave, I’ll avenge myself for him running his mouth off at me the other day.

「Say. You know the other day, although you ran your mouth off at me calling me an atrocity and all, do you understand just how hard it is for a vampire to get blood without using hypnotism?」

Wrath maintains his silence. It seems he’s the type who keeps quiet when he’s at a disadvantage.

「Certainly, if you go by human values then us vampires may be intrinsically evil beings. Okay then, are you telling me to go die?」

「That's not what I meant...」

「Oh really? Isn't it pretty much the same thing? "Don't use hypnotism". With just that, doesn't it mean that my only options are to arbitrarily assault others, or to be stupidly honest and beg for blood? I already said it just now, but do you really think there's people whimsical enough to accept a request for blood? Of course there aren't any. Then doesn't that mean I have no choice but to assault others? However, I think that's far worse than what I've been doing.」

Actually, since I am a True Ancestor, it's not really the case that I can't live without consuming blood. However, since I've already gotten the taste for blood, even if I'm ordered to live without it I have no confidence that I could endure it. Things will get complicated if he learned that though, but since it won't be exposed unless I tell him, I'll just keep quiet.

「If I can use hypnotism, I can erase their memory of being attacked as well, and instead they can experience a good feeling. Did you know? Apparently having your blood sucked feels good. If I can suck blood then I'm happy. If the other person can feel good without being scared then they're happy. If both sides are happy then isn't that a win-win situation?」

It does seem to be true that having your blood sucked feels good. I'm the one doing the sucking so I haven't experienced it myself though, but I've heard from those that I have sucked that it feels as good as sex. So well, after I've sucked for a bit that's why the action often heads in that direction.

Wrath shows a revolted expression to my remarks about feeling good. What's with this guy? Is he a virgin?

「Are you a virgin?」

「Bwah!?!」

Wrath bursts out in surprise, like something from a comedy sketch.

「Wha, wha-wha-wha, what the!?!」

Ah, so he is a virgin. Hmm-mm.

「If you let me suck your blood, how about I help you lose your virginity?」

At those words that just popped out, I shocked myself. Beyond that, Wrath was so shocked that he's totally frozen. We continue to stare at each other in silence.

「I won't do something so frivolous.」

The first one to open their mouth is Wrath. With a weary sounding tone, he makes that prudish comment.

「Say, aren't you being overly constrained by the common sense of your previous life?」

To those words that just popped out again, it felt like my heart thumped in my chest. That's right. The previous life is the previous life. While I was definitely a human in my previous life, and though I have a similar form in this life, inside I'm a completely different creature. In that case, isn't it obvious that my common sense and everything else is different.

『Ojou-sama, would your parents be proud of you as you are now?』

Those words from Merazofis are always in my heart. I feel that I have found an answer, though it's faint. I'm not yet able to put it into proper words, but I feel that I have grasped the starting point.

I am myself. I am a vampire. In the end, it's like Wrath says. I can choose to die as a human, or I can continue to live as a vampire. Only one of those. In that case, I will choose to live as a vampire.

Thinking that, it seems foolish to have worried so much until now. I'm fine with being evil. Since I'm a vampire, what's wrong with living as a vampire? Thinking that human common sense actually applies to a vampire, is a strange assumption in the first place.

「In that case, then aren't you abandoning your previous life too much, Negishi Akiko-san?」

I don't know what he's thinking by needlessly calling me by my name from my previous life. However, this guy really is gifted at rubbing people the wrong way!

「What's wrong with that? From my point of view, by clinging to humanity no

matter what despite being non-human, it's you who seems to be seriously warped though, Sasajima Kyouya-kun.」

I tried calling Wrath by his name from his previous life in response. When I did, he obviously grimaced.

Hmm-mm. I don't know why Wrath hates his name from his previous life so much, but if he hates it that much then maybe I should always call him Kyouya-kun from now on?

Translation notes:

“Atrocity” - a reference to chapter 260 presumably, when Wrath used that word to refer to Sophia's past behaviour.

In the “Elf Village Battle” arc, which should be a few years in the future from this chapter, Sophia refers to Wrath as “Kyouya-kun”. Perhaps this is where that started.

Oni 17 - The Weak Are Meat, The Strong Do Eat

「In the first place, what's with "Wrath"? Because you have the Wrath skill you used it for your name? That's gotta be an alias, right? It's not like you're chuunibyou. Ah, were you chuunibyou? In that case, I'm oh so sorry. So that it doesn't become something you want to pretend never happened, I shall kindly refer to you as Kyouya-kun from now on.」

To Sophia-san, who is grinning while agitating me, I'm unable to answer back. Her emotions really do show easily on her face. She's full of desire to taunt me, clearly. She has an obviously indecent smile playing on her face, so it seems she intends to continue to verbally attack me. Since I'm at a disadvantage with the subject alone, maybe it's natural.

Chuunibyou. I'd never have expected it to be said that way. Well, certainly if I calmly think back on it, that really does seem like the sort of thing a chuunibyou sufferer would like. At the time when I had changed my name, I was completely exhausted mentally, so I chose the first simple name that came to mind. I can't deny that it was a chuunibyou-ish choice. By way of excuse, since I had never thought that any of my classmates from the same world had reincarnated here, I had thought that nobody would understand the meaning of the word.

Being called chuunibyou to my face, I immediately feel ashamed. It is such a strange sensation, as if I had suddenly been thrown out from a dream and into reality. Well, still, if I'm chuunibyou then wouldn't Shiro-san also be about the same?

「Let's say I'm chuunibyou for argument's sake, then could you say the same about Shiro-san?」

Sophia-san cannot go against Shiro-san. Even in the short time I've been here, I've realised the pecking order. Thus, I use that as a basis for a counterattack. When I consider how petty this argument is, I feel dejected. This should have been a serious argument originally, so how did it end up as a discussion on

chuunibyou etc?

「Bwah!? Are you an idiot or what?! Goshujin-sama is that! That, that!」

As if her speaking ability is being obstructed, she's unable to come up with a good follow-up. Or rather, she's seriously flustered isn't she. Is she that scared of Shiro-san?

「I, I don't think that! While there's nothing she can do about her body being white, I don't wonder what with her clothes also being uniformly white, or what's with her keeping her eyes closed despite not being blind - I don't think that at all!」

Is it only me who can hear her totally self-destructing? Sophia-san, I've been wondering about this for a while, but you're basically a bit of an idiot, right?

Ah.

「You called?」

Before I knew it, indeed, without Sophia-san or I noticing her at all, Shiro-san was there. Right behind Sophia-san.

「I see, I see-e. So that's how you thought of me huh-h. Chuunibyou huh-h. Nai wa-a.」

Hm? She's different to normal. Her tone is off as well, and her usually white complexion is rather red. Above all else, I'd never seen Shiro-san showing any expression at all, but now she's smiling like an idiot.

Sophia-san has frozen so hard you could almost hear the sound effect of ice going "crick". Shiro-san is also leaning her head against Sophia-san's shoulder. As Shiro-san breathes out a long burp, Sophia-san grimaces.

「Go, goshujin-sama? Have you drunk... alcohol?」

「I ha-ave! It's so delicious!」

As if finding something funny, Shiro-san cackles. You can drink once you're twenty. Well, yeah, even I realise it's a bit too late to be talking about that though.

Still, this is Shiro-san's drunken state huh. I had heard about it from Sophia-san, but this transformation is really beyond my expectations. Isn't she a

completely different person?

「My clothes are white because it's easier-r. If I wanted to dye them I could, but it's a bother so I don't okay-y. Fashion? Is that something tasty?」

Is this what is known as an aggressive drunk? Shiro-san has restrained Sophia-san so that she can't run away, and Sophia-san is even making a desperate expression while trying to escape from that restraint. Her pale expression indicates just how terrified she is.

「As for keeping my eyes closed, that's so as to not show my Evil Eyes! They're not some chuunibyou thing but Evil Eyes for real okay! If I show them you might even die but do you wanna see anyway?」

「Eeeek!? You don't need to show them! You don't need to show them okay!?!」

She's even started to raise a scream. This has clearly become too pitiful to watch, so I guess I'll stop it.

「Shiro-san, that's more than...」

「Chomp.」

The moment I tried to call out to her, Shiro-san bit Sophia-san's ear. What's often called play-biting... is not what happened, it's more like bitten off. While Shiro-san is actually apart from her, Sophia-san's ear that was surely there just now has suddenly gone. While I stare in mute amazement, Shiro-san makes some chewing movements with her mouth.

「Crunch.」

「No-o-o-o-o! I'm being eaten! I'm being eaten again after all this time!?!」

「Geh-heh-heh. Don't mind if I do.」

「Ah, hey!? Don't remove my clothes! Wait, wait! My body is not food okay! Don't just stare, save me! 」

Huh!? It seems my thought processes had been frozen.

「Shiro-san, stop, stop!」

The moment I reach out a hand to try to separate Sophia-san from Shiro-san, Shiro-san's eyes opened. I think it couldn't be helped that I stopped moving out of surprise. What was there was, some strange eyes where there were multiple additional pupils within the pupils.

「King Crimson! Not quite the same though.」

「Huh?」

Before I knew it, Shiro-san had vanished. But she should have been right in front of me. It's not just Shiro-san, as Sophia-san has also vanished. Or, so I thought, but with her clothes in a state of disarray, Sophia-san is slumped on the floor, lying down on her stomach.

「Eh?」

Am I being shown an illusion or something? The scene in front of me now, is inconsistent with the scene a moment ago.

「You're back to normal?」

While still lying down on her stomach, Sophia-san speaks to me in a tired voice. Her voice indicates that she has no intention of getting up either.

「What happened?」

「Who knows? You suddenly froze and stopped moving.」

Something was done to me.

「"The weak are meat, the strong do eat" is pretty terrifying.」

The least I can do for Sophia-san who is slumped and hanging her head in shame, is to take off my tunic and lay it over her.

Translation notes:

"The weak are meat, the strong do eat" - this is a literal translation of a particular idiom, which would normally be translated as "survival of the fittest" or "the law of the jungle". I kept the literal meaning since it's particularly appropriate for this chapter. The line at the end is spoken by Sophia.

Legally and morally, it's considered wrong to drink alcohol until you've come of age in Japan - at age 20.

"Geh-heh-heh. Don't mind if I do." - this is a cliché line though not quite the cliché scenario. The "normal" scenario would be in a Japanese period drama with a dirty old man abusing his authority to take advantage of a woman, typically said while starting to strip the woman. At this point, it would often be

time for the hero to make a dramatic entrance.

“King Crimson” - another JoJo reference. Presumably this was Shiro’s “Static Evil Eye” as seen in chapter 226.

Chapter 261 - Liquor Is The Best Medicine

When I woke up I was on a bed in the mansion. How strange. Yesterday I'm sure I shut myself in another dimension with some wine and snacks to munch. Did I get drunk without noticing and then came back here and slept, perhaps?

It's a problem that I've forgotten everything while drunk, but never mind. I can rapidly break down alcohol if I want to, but if I did that there'd be no point in drinking it. You can't call wine without alcohol a wine! Well, if necessary I can download the memories from my clones that are all over the place, no problem. I'm not going to download the memories for now though. I mean, seriously, wouldn't you be a bit scared to see how you had behaved after getting heavily drunk?

I shake my head in denial, and check if there's any problems with my physical condition. I wouldn't have a hangover from drinking, so this is just a precaution against some unlikely event okay. Yep, I'm in perfect condition again today. I also feel that my skin has gotten a healthy glow to it for some reason. Yeah, alcohol is good for the health indeed.

I leave the room in order to get breakfast, heading to the dining hall. Vampire girl and oni-kun are already seated there.

「Good morning.」

「M, morning.」

A polite greeting from oni-kun, and a greeting from vampire girl with her face going somewhat stiff. She showed this kind of behaviour once or twice on our journey as well, so I guess vampire girl isn't a morning person after all?

「Mm.」

I guess it's better than saying nothing, so I give a short reply. I sit next to vampire girl. For some reason, vampire girl sits bolt upright.

「Umm.」

Hm?

「For what occurred yesterday, I think it would be better to stop.」

Oni-kun said that in a reproachful tone of voice. Hmm? Yesterday? I did something yesterday?

I glance towards vampire girl. Well, I say that, but since I keep my eyes closed there's no actual eye contact. Vampire girl is staring at oni-kun as if seeing something unbelievable. Eh? What's this? What happened yesterday?

「Sophia-san objected to it as well, and I think that it's wrong to force someone who is objecting. Even though you were drunk on alcohol, I still think that there are things that are acceptable and things that are not.」

Alcohol. Drunk.

Emergency request to all clones within the mansion! Download the memory from yesterday when the main body was drunk! The clones stealthily hidden around the mansion transmit the memories to the main body. I look at the memories I received one by one, filling in the relevant omissions.

Bwah!? What the heck is this!?

Oi! Oi, me from yesterday! What're you doing!? This isn't some mere aggressive drunk! I've gotten a glimpse of something far more terrifying!

Seriously. Nai wa. Totally nai wa. Objectively viewing myself while drunk, I'm nai wa.

I pounced on vampire girl, and zapped oni-kun with my Static Evil Eye when he tried to stop me. I did whatever I liked. Or rather, if I try my best I'll be able to talk that fluently! Ah, yes. This isn't the time to escape from reality. What should I do?

I turn towards vampire girl. She delicately tries to avoid me while staying seated. Ahh, right.

「I'm sorry.」

Indeed.

Umm, vampire girl. Why is your face trembling in disbelief now? If I've done something wrong I will at least apologise you know? I shall refrain from alcohol for a while. If I'm going to drink, I'll do it with D around. Um, no, that'd also be

pretty scary somehow. For the time being I shall go teetotal. Ugh, it's painful but there's no other way.

I return my gaze to oni-kun, and he makes a relieved expression for himself. It's possible that oni-kun was prepared to die when he admonished me. Well, I can hardly blame him for thinking that perhaps I wouldn't listen to him after seeing THAT from yesterday. Alcohol sure has a huge pitfall huh. Scary.

「Goshujin-sama. Are you really the real goshujin-sama?」

Vampire girl has started saying something rather strange. I wanna retort by asking what she'd do if I wasn't the real one.

「Do you have a fever or something? Did you eat something strange? Have you gotten a screw loose?」

Oi, hey. Just how on earth do you see me? It's depressing so I silence her with a chop to the head.

「Oww!? Isn't that too mean!? I'm worried about you but isn't that too mean!?!」

「No, just now, the mean one was you Sophia-san, I'd say」

To vampire girl's protest, oni-kun calmly retorts. Hmm, hmm. Things have become so noisy and irrational with just an apology. Unlike a certain Evil God somewhere, I can hold a proper conversation. I'm not D! Not D!

「But, it's that goshujin-sama? That goshujin-sama who is like an atrocity incarnate? That goshujin-sama who loves mass-murder and eating people's flesh such that it makes me want to ask if you were born in hell?」

Vampire girl's image of me seems to be like that of a Great Demon King. Eh? Really that much? Do I really have such a bad image?

Ahh, uhh. Thinking back on things, I was the trigger that lead to the destruction of vampire girl's hometown that also raged violently in the war, and now that you mention it I did make that elf-meat stir-fry afterwards didn't I. Or rather, aside from all that, from the expressions that vampire girl is using I guess that yesterday wasn't my first offense? If so then it would be consistent. All too consistent. Oh no! Then this means that in vampire girl's mind I'm like a monster that devours people's flesh night after night!? It's not exactly wrong so

I can't say anything!

「Hey, isn't that saying a bit too much?」

「It's all true though.」

「Eh?」

Oni-kun looks towards me in shock. Stop! Don't look at me like that! I unintentionally turn my face away to avoid his gaze.

D「I received a signal that a certain spider was dissing me so I'm off to punish it.」

Meido「Did you think I would let you go? Get on with your work please.」

Translation notes:

The word “sake” can be used to refer to any alcoholic drink rather than just Japanese rice wine. So when you see “wine” above, it doesn't literally mean grape wine. Somewhat related, it is said that Japanese sake brewers often have a healthy glow to their skin.

“I'm not D! Not D!” - probably a reference to the famous Gundam line “It's not a Zaku, not a Zaku!”

Chapter 262 - If You Want To Pass Beyond This Point Then Go Ahead After Defeating Me!

Well, it's no surprise that oni-kun is shocked huh. While it is the case that oni-kun has committed massacres while having lost control due to Wrath, that was only because he was being dominated by Wrath. It's not something he did of his own volition. However, in my case though, I did it of my own free will. I snapped and then did it. However, I have neither regrets nor remorse! Besides, considering what I am going to do in future, what I've done until now is like a picnic in comparison.

Perhaps not knowing what to say, oni-kun's mouth repeatedly opens and closes. Vampire girl seems to be uncomfortable due to her own words having caused a difficult atmosphere. Humph. I guess now's the time that I should declare my own thoughts a bit. Whatever path either of them will take in future, that is for them to decide. It's not my business. However, that's only so long as they don't interfere with my own path.

「I will commit massacres in the future as well.」

I'll establish this first. While it might not be something that I will do with my own hands, I am still one of masterminds behind the large scale war that will occur between the demons and the humans. It's certain that the number of people killed in action will be on a completely different level compared to when I went wild during the war between the country of Sariera and the Divine Word Religion. In addition, at that time I will probably kill the current Hero myself. Since I'll have to be intervening with the System, killing him myself is the most reliable way. In the case that the Hero attacks together with a large army, then I might have to kill them all together. Depending on the situation, it wouldn't even be strange if I had to deal with the entire army that the Hero is with all by myself. Whole-scale massacre, in other words. Well, either way, whether it's directly or indirectly, it doesn't change the fact that I will be causing massacres.

「It is up to you to decide what to think about that. But, if you get in my way then I will show no mercy. So long as you don't get in my way, then I don't mind how you live your lives.」

With my eyes half-open, I declare that to vampire girl and oni-kun. Just by looking at someone with my eyes I cause terror. I think it's likely that the only ones in the world who can withstand this are the Demon King and Kuro. To know this terror and still challenge me, I think that's true determination. In such a case, I would seriously crush them out of genuine respect. I will show no mercy to my opponents. Even if they don't have the power to thwart me, I will still not hold back in the slightest.

I am aware that it is possible for a weak existence to continue to survive despite facing much stronger opponents, and to eventually climb up to the peak of overwhelming strength. Since that is none other than my own situation. Therefore, I won't be careless even if they're weak. In their own way, the weak can still defeat the strong.

This is exactly why, so that an upset will never occur, I will dispassionately advance my preparations. Regardless of whether they're strong or weak, there can be no other way. For the sake of satisfying the conditions of my victory. Because I am a spider after all. So that the battle will be decided the moment that my prey is wrapped in my threads, I prepare traps in advance. I'm currently at the point of building my web for that. Far and wide, my threads are spreading throughout the world. In order to arrange a stage that is convenient for me.

「I will not ask you to give me your answers immediately, but please consider your plans for the future.」

I wonder what choices vampire girl and oni-kun will make. Depending on that it might be necessary to adjust my scenario. In order to keep the stage in perfect condition. Even if just a little, so that no obstacles to my plan will arise, I shall remove any worrying elements at an early stage.

For vampire girl, I doubt she'll become hostile with her current attitude. However, I don't know about oni-kun. Based on Wakaba Hiroyuki's memories from the previous world, I don't fully understand oni-kun's temperament. Many

things have happened to him in this world as well, so who knows how he's changed.

I've given them my warning. I guess I'll have to wait-and-see for a bit, before deciding what to do next.

Sigh. I'm worn out from talking. Or maybe I should say, haven't I been talking a bit too much lately? If I continue to talk so much then my throat will become worn out. My throat isn't meant for speaking more than ten words in a single day! Maybe I should go to Japan for a bit to buy throat lozenges?

For the time being I need something to drink to wet my throat. Ah, I do just happen to have that large coffee can from D's house. Come to think of it I've never drunk coffee before. I wonder about using coffee just to wet my throat, but ah whatever.

I take the coffee can out from the storage dimension. I open the pull tab, and take a sip. Mmm. This is black coffee indeed. D was a black coffee drinker, yeah.

「Eh? Hey, that's!? Canned coffee!?」

Ah. Whoops. I shouldn't have drunk this in front of vampire girl and oni-kun. There's no mistaking it, I've spoken so much that my normal judgement is impaired. Now then, how am I going to gloss over this? Hm?

Thud!

「Eh!? Huh!? What's the matter!?」

Uwhya thah? Wwahht, summat wyyrd hahh haahhenned?

「Hey!? Goshujin-sama!? Are you okay!?」

Ay hahb ahbsohbed sahmsing tsurayngue, bwa ay kaahnn speyykk.

State of emergency declared. Drastic reduction in thinking ability experienced in the main body. Abnormality in physical ability observed. In accordance with the unusual conditions the clones are to take decisive action to eject the abnormality from the main body. Validated that the specified substance is affecting the main body. Commencing removal operation.

Discontinue removal operation. Negative influence additionally detected in the clone responsible for removal. Judged that there is no significant

dysfunction. Restoration likely with time. Temporarily quarantine the main body in another dimension. Adjust objective to await for recovery.

「Eh? She vanished.」

「Space Magic or something I guess?」

「What happened, just now?」

「She seemed to become strange after drinking coffee though.」

「Coffee. I seem to remember hearing some trivia saying that spiders get drunk when they drink coffee, but surely that's not it?」

「Certainly not. I doubt that would be enough to make her so unsteady.」

「I was shocked when she suddenly collapsed, but since she used Space Magic on her own I guess she's okay?」

「Maybe?」

D「To think she'd self-destruct before I could go and knock her down. Every time she cuts across my expectations at some weird angle.」

Translation notes:

For the title, it might not be a specific reference to something but it is in rather proud/boastful "You shall not pass!" kind of tone.

When Shiro is talking to Sophia and Wrath here, as well as using long sentences she is using proper grammar and so on for once, though it's rather neutral in tone. It's similar to how D talks.

"how am I going to gloss over this" - this is a deliberately misspelling at the end, as Shiro's thoughts start to go haywire. It's nearly gibberish so I'm not going to try to explain what I think she means.

The conversation at the end is Sophia and Wrath talking in turns. Incidentally, it is true that spiders can get weird when on caffeine.

Chapter 263 - I Couldn't Win Against Caffeine

Ahh!? Where is this? Who am I?

Hrm? No, seriously, where is this? There's this rather sudden break in my memory though, so what happened? Or rather, I feel absolutely horrible. I feel like I'm going to vomit, yet I can't. It's like, between my stomach and my mouth is the origin of the horrible feelings that are swirling around, coming and going. My body also seems quite sluggish, and I've got this pounding headache as well. Since becoming a god this is the first time that my physical condition has gotten this bad.

This is dangerous, so for now I perform an emergency check on whether there's any risk to my life. While my physical condition has never been worse, my life is not at risk. Although that does bring a sense of relief, since I don't know what actually caused this condition, I can't become truly relieved. I download the memories from my clones, attempting to search for the gaps in the main body's memory to figure out what happened.

It appears, that it was almost immediately after I drank coffee that I went strange. Da heck? Since it's something that D drank it's possible that there was something dubious in it. But when I check the diagnostics information from when the main body collapsed and the clones attempted to performed recovery, there's no real trace of any strange substances within my body. The cause of my bad condition is... caffeine?

Da heck? Caffeine is, that caffeine, right? Something that is normally contained within coffee and similar. This is what caused my condition to become so bad that I collapsed in a heap? Eh, seriously, why?

Though I understand the cause, the uncertain situation has become even more confusing. For now, what I know is that it appears that my constitution cannot handle caffeine. When my clones attempted to decompose the caffeine, their condition became bad instead, so it can be considered to be quite

fundamental. The substance that cannot even be decomposed with the power of god - caffeine. How terrifying. I don't understand humans who just chug this stuff down. I had thought I had gotten used to eating poison, but there was still an unexpected pitfall out there.

Siiigh. For now, I'll laze around here until my physical condition improves. Though the clones had been configured so that if the main body collapses it'll be tossed into another dimension after a while, their quick judgement was excellent work. If my body had been left defenceless there like that, who knows just what would have happened to it. Well, even if it was attacked or something, that probably wouldn't lead to a situation where I would die though. Even if my main body was killed, I wouldn't actually die.

No, self-conceit is no good. After all, mere caffeine was almost enough to kill me even. Mere caffeine. Plain ordinary caffeine.

In practice, I'm not so fragile that it's possible for someone within the System to be able to kill me, is what I think, but it's not absolutely the case that I can't be killed. It's kinda like a battle between an ant and an elephant. If they fight normally, then there wouldn't be any contest. However, what if the ant got into the elephant's ear? Maybe it'd then be possible that the elephant could die.

I can say that from experience. If an ordinary human fights me normally there's no reason why they could win. There's none, but, occasionally those things called miracles do happen. That is how I myself have repeatedly beaten higher ranked opponents after all.

Of course, even if they're higher ranked, rather than it being due to a miracle, I take pride in winning through with my own power. However, I always ran away from opponents I thought that I could never beat. Like Alaba, like Mother. The higher ranked opponents that I beat, were solely limited to those within touching distance. I never even challenged an opponent I couldn't beat without wishing for a miracle in the first place.

That is how things are now. Having absolutely no chance of winning, it could be said that I ran away from D. By the action of accepting rather than rejecting D's proposal to become her kin.

My basic policy has always been to give top priority to survival. However,

there is a certain little obstinacy attached to that. Due to that obstinacy there is an essential matter over which I am unwilling to negotiate, though I guess that's unavoidable. Since if I yield on that then I wouldn't be me anymore.

My very existence itself, is considerably vague. Originally I was an ordinary spider. Due to D's whim, that then became an existence prepared as a scapegoat for her. Furthermore, under the assumption that I would die, my memory and everything were made without consideration for the details. Although it wasn't to the extent that I would be conscious of such doubts, my memories of Wakaba Hiroyuki are flawed you know. Even though I believed that I had parents, I can't recall their faces at all, for example. But despite having such flawed memories, I didn't feel any doubt. Because D manipulated things so that I wouldn't feel that way.

To say it again, I genuinely feel that I can only be myself. My past memories are a sham, and cannot serve as a foundation for myself. Even the status values and skills that I cultivated within this world, are merely power within the framework of the System created by D's hand.

Once I was able to free myself from that System, I had thought that I would be able to become free. Liberated from a troublesome world, with my life no longer at constant risk, I had believed that I would be able to live a quiet and comfortable life. Looking at the results, as usual there is always someone better than you, and at the end of the day all that's happened is that I have this rather unchanging world. Unable to defy the absolute being known as D, I'm living the life of a gopher who has to watch over the fate of this world. On top of that, the foundation of my own existence was overturned, delivering the shocking truth.

I can't take it any more. The human who I had thought that I was, actually was a complete stranger with absolutely no relation to the original me after all. On top of that, my original memory is basically equivalent to nothing. The existence known as me, might as well have been born in the place known as the Elro Great Labyrinth, raising a baby's first cry for the first time after breaking open its eggshell, basically. That's just how much I am in the palm of D's hand.

I was born to be a convenient sacrificial pawn for D. However, I betrayed that assumption and survived. Having amused D, this time I'm being allowed to live. There's no place for my own desires. It's all for D's convenience.

Just about everything about the existence known as me, is connected with D. Having her eye on me for becoming her kin, just means that the connection between us can now never be broken no matter how I try. Looking at it that way, maybe D is basically like my parent. However, being born under the assumption that I would die, that's way beyond mere child neglect there buddy.

Perhaps when all is said and done, I'm currently like a child in a rebellious phase huh. While keeping it below the level where it could offend D, I'll take the maximum possible actions that go counter to her expectations. I don't want to be called petty though. What I'm doing is accompanying the greatest individual project in the whole world you know.

Ahh! This ain't good. I suspect that because I feel bad that my thoughts are going in a negative direction. Well, rather than suspect, they've completely declining.

Normally I'd never be thinking such things. Normally I'd obviously be like "I am what I am so I'll do whatever I want!"

However, no matter what, I just end up having such thoughts. Like, "for what reason I am living I wonder".

Even if I say so for myself, I think I'm saying some pretty immature stuff. I think so, but having been created under the assumption that I would die and being an existence where everything was fabricated I do wonder what's the meaning of my life? I just don't know. I live because I want to live. I think that's enough, but on the other hand that thought just won't go away from my mind at all. Having gained a human shape, has my heart also become closer to being human maybe?

Argh, stop stop! I'm definitely thinking all these wishy-washy things because my physical condition is bad. When my physical condition returns I'll return back to normal. So until then I'll just go to bed in a huff. Yeah, let's do that.

Translation notes:

"Even though I believed that I had parents" - perhaps an indirect reference to chapter 7.

Chapter 264 - Main Body Has Gotten A Job

On waking up after sleeping all night, I feel refreshed. I had worried about what to do if my physical condition was still bad today, but I'm glad that it turned out to be a needless anxiety.

For now, with regards to my idea about having an official position during the conference with the Divine Word Religion, let's go coax one from the Demon King. Well, getting an official position in name only where I don't actually have to do anything would be good, yeah.

「You want a job, Shiro-chan? Okay, I'll give you the 10th Army, so manage them.」

Whoa!? When I casually asked “give me some kinda official position” I got an army corps forced onto me. Why did this happen? No seriously, why?

「Why?」

「Right now, Balto is focused on reorganising the army, but even though we have soldiers we don't have the commanders to lead them. The 10th Army is in the midst of being formed so it doesn't even have soldiers attached to it yet though. For that reason, our Demon King Army doesn't have the luxury to let capable personnel be idle!」

Says the person who is eating sweets laid out on her desk. Regarding the matter of idling around, despite what she's saying, the leading contender is the person at the top of the Demon King Army.

「By the way, Kuro-chan took control over the 9th Army.」

Each Administrator is the leader of an army corps huh. Surely it's not absolutely necessary for us to have an army with us? War potential wise, surely it would be enough to be a commander without soldiers? Well, despite saying that perhaps I've also become like that.

「No really, we seriously are short on capable personnel. Although we tried dragging out the bunch who were laying low in the free regions, most of them can't really even fight. They're excellent as government officials though.」

The demon territory is a place based on the merit system. Well, more or less. Because it is a government based on brute strength, the living standards aren't up to those in the human territories though. Reality is a merit system () after all.

「So there you have it, I'll get Balto to bring over the list of soldiers who aren't yet attached later, so go ahead and organise a suitable army corps.」

「Even though I don't have any experience with that?」

「It's fine, it's fine. Where there's a will, there's a way.」

The actual end result is that I've become an army commander. On top of that, the Demon King is totally intending to work me hard. I had only expected to take up an official position in name but not in deed, so how did it end up like this?

However, having taken over responsibility, or rather, forcibly had responsibility pushed on to me, there's no way that I can't do it. In the Demon King's Castle an office room will be set aside for my personal use, so clearly the Demon King is quite serious about this.

I've so easily gotten a job without actually intending to. I more or less have the title to my name of being a candidate for D's kin, so until now I've had the sense of being an employee in training though. Is this a bit like becoming a section manager at my training place perhaps? Not quite? I certainly don't have any memories of being a working adult so I don't understand anything about the corporate workplace and such.

Dear gentlemen who are struggling with poor employment prospects in Japan. The Demon King's Army is seeking skilled personnel. Excellent wages, decent working hours, just no guarantees of survival. Please come for an interview. We will be waiting.

Ahh. It seems like I've agreed to the Demon King with a somewhat "I guess I'll give it a go" type feeling huh. However, thinking about it seriously, it might actually be good to have an army that I can use however I like. Since I generally use my clones I hadn't really thought about it one way or another before. When I use my clones, I'm doing it with the sense of it having to be behind the scenes after all. If I have an army, it means I can boldly take action center stage as well. For now though, I don't know whether there'll be any merit for that or not.

If I'm going to develop an army anyway, it's reasonable that I'd want to have some acquaintances in it. Thus, I tried asking vampire girl and oni-kun if they want to enlist.

「I have my studies still.」

「Please let me think about it for a bit.」

They declined. Unbelievable. I had thought that maybe one of them would have joined, but it seems it was just my one-sided feelings. Dammit.

For now, since Felmina-chan is in my care, I will compel her to participate. She's originally an ojou-sama who received good education, so she should be able to handle operational management for an army. Thus, she is inaugurated as deputy commander. Once I decided that and went to inform the person herself, she acknowledged it while having a vague smile on her face. I'm sure she's panicking on the inside, but to not show that in her expression her skills as a noble are amazing. I would like a certain vampire who readily shows her feelings on her face to follow her example a bit.

Later in the evening, Balto came bringing a huge amount of documents including a list of the soldiers, and I said that I'd like to headhunt Mera who is in his group. I was refused politely though. I'm told that Mera is already entrusted with an army corps, and before long he will replace Balto as the commander of the 4th Army. With Balto freed from that it seems he'll then be managing all the armies directly under the Demon King, so he'll probably be just as busy as ever. Balto is seriously suffering from overwork, but he's not going to die, right? Mera looks as much like a corpse or even worse though. They seemed to have become rather pitiful so I performed some magic on them to restore their vigor. Do your best Balto. Stay alive Balto.

The next day my personal office in the Demon King's Castle was prepared, and I became immersed in processing the documents handed to me by Balto. Completing the documents for establishing the new army corps within half a day, organising the office within a day, Balto's ability with office work has reached the maximum limit. Maybe it'd be better to leave everything to him already? Ah, then Balto would totally die from overwork. However, please don't bring me additional documents faster than I can process them though, okay? What a man you are, Balto-san.

In that kind of mood, it seems like I've been having a staring match with documents and already several days have passed in a flash. Since I've been sitting in a chair the whole damn time my bottom and back have gotten sore. Also, since I've been keeping my eyes closed and reading the documents with fluoroscopy my eyes have gotten worn out in a strange way. Rather than normal eye strain, it's more like I should say that I've gotten eye strain in magic ability or something I guess. Also, I've written so much that my hands are sore. To turn the body of a god into such damaged goods, desk work sure is terrifying. I've gotten a glimpse of the suffering Balto endures. I'm glad that I appointed Felmina as deputy commander. I certainly wouldn't have been able to win this battle by myself. I've really been saved by having my capable secretary Felmina-chan by my side.

Now then, although the documents aren't yet completely finished, I have to proceed to another battlefield. Time to go to the battlefield known as the second conference with the Divine Word Religion.

D「Paperwork is painful.」
Meido「Work faster!」

Translation notes:

With regards to Shiro wanting an “official position”, see Informal Conference ②.

“Reality is a merit system () after all” - the () is in the raw, for some reason.

Chapter 265 - The Demon King Is A NEET But Not A Shut-In

「Then, let's get going!」

As for the Demon King who says that with a huge smile, first of all I'll kick her to the ground.

「Meanie! You've got this beautiful girl visiting you, and yet your welcome response is a kick of all things!」

「I didn't call you. Leave.」

To the Demon King who is rather deliberately cowering on the floor with her hand covering her face in sad pose, I repeatedly kick her over until she's driven out from the room. I shut the door and take a breath. What did she come for anyway?

「Okay, okay. This time I'm seriously asking you to bring me along. You're just about to go to the Divine Word Religion, right?」

Opening the door I had just closed, the Demon King re-enters while spouting that nonsense.

「It's not the sort of place I can take a NEET to.」

The Demon King is taken aback, so much so that I can almost hear a "kadoom" sound effect.

「Even Shiro-chan is denouncing me as a NEET huh.....」

You practically are a NEET though, aren't you. Balto is doing almost all the work after all.

「If it comes to that, then I'll have to destroy the world by myself!」

「Quit it.」

If the Demon King got serious she pretty much could do so after all. Even for a joke that's no joke.

「Well, putting the joke to the side, bring me along.」

「Eh?」

「Eh?」

The Demon King freezes for a short while.

「It couldn't possibly be, that Shiro-chan seriously thinks of me as a useless NEET, right? Right?」

It seems that she has real tears in her eyes, but what am I going to do about her now? Seeking some assistance I glance at Felmina-chan, but she's organising some documents while giving off an "I'm in the middle of work" vibe. I get a strong feeling that she doesn't want anything to do with this. I kinda get the impression that this girl has gotten a bit impudent lately.

「Oh? That's the girl that you picked up, Shiro-chan?」

The Demon King noticed my glance, and locks onto Felmina-chan. The locked on Felmina-chan raises her head and makes eye contact with the Demon King.

「Pleased to meet you. I am called Felmina. I do not have a family name.」

Despite having kept up that "no concern of mine" attitude until a moment ago, she gives a polite greeting without showing any reluctance on her face. Just what you'd expect of an ex-noble. She has no family name because she's an "ex". Though she has none, she has a perfect iron wall cultivated behind that ladylike greeting. However, I bet on the inside she thinks that this is a bother, no doubt.

「Hiya. Thanks for your consideration. I'm Ariel. The Demon King.」

At the Demon King's self-introduction, Femina-chan's movement instantly stops. She glances towards me, so I give a slight nod.

Yup. This is the first time Felmina-chan's seen the Demon King after all. Or rather, I think there's hardly anybody who knows that the Demon King is the Demon King. I'm sure she wouldn't have realised that this thing is the Demon King. She's desperately keeping up a neutral expression, but wouldn't she freely be breaking into a cold sweat on the inside I wonder? The proof of that, is that I hear her heartbeat becoming wild.

「So, what did you come for?」

In order to stop the Demon King from noticing, I address her. Worrying about her subordinate's heart, I'm such a kind boss. Yet despite that, Felmina-chan's heartbeat speeds up even further. Incomprehensible.

「No no no! Shiro-chan, I've already been asking since earlier, right? If you're going over to the Divine Word Religion's place then I'm coming too okay - I'm pretty sure I've said it many times already though!？」

Ah, that wasn't a joke but genuinely seriously honestly then huh. I'd been convinced that this NEET wouldn't want to work. So-o-o sorry. However, to think that this NEET would actually be willing to work, perhaps this is an omen that the end of the world is nigh? Oi, what the hell is Gyurigyuri doing!? The world is in crisis!

「Hey, you better not thinking something incredibly rude okay?」

Nothing of the sort. Even if what I really was thinking was rude she wouldn't be able to realise it. Well, I guess there's no problem in bringing the Demon King along too. I bet she wouldn't work even if I left her behind. She's a NEET ya know.

No help for it then but to add the NEET as another member to our Divine Word Religion attack squad. When I had tentatively asked vampire girl and oni-kun they had both indicated that they would be able to go. When I asked Felmina-chan if she was coming just in case, she gave a Japanese-like humble refusal of "Unfortunately I'm wouldn't be of much use", indicating that she had no intention of going. I somehow felt that it could be rather interesting to forcibly bring her along, so after a nod I condemned her with "I'm sure that's not the case so let's go". Condemned to death by coercion. You can only answer "yes" or "yes, sir". You have no right of veto! I'm sure it's just my imagination that behind the iron wall her ladylike smile is twitching.

Thus, bringing the Demon King and Felmina-chan along we leave to pick up vampire girl and oni-kun. In the process, we ran into Balto's younger brother the hoodlum. This guy shouldn't normally be in the castle, but why do I keep running into him so frequently? It seems he noticed us as well and he looks at me. He probably doesn't intend to, but since he has an unpleasant look in his eyes by nature it feels like he's seriously glaring at me so I wish he'd stop that.

As if granting my wish, the hoodling shifts his gaze from me to fasten onto the Demon King beside me. His expression becomes grimmer. It seems like he wasn't really glaring at me after all. The gaze he has focused on the Demon King could certainly be called a real glare.

「Bitch, where do you think you're going?」

The hoodlum has started a eyeballing match!

「Surely it's my choice to go wherever I want?」

The Demon King doesn't waver!

「Aniki is working without even time to sleep, yet you're on a carefree stroll huh?」

Almost as if I can hear a “breaking” sound effect, I can tell that the hoodlum has snapped. I can almost see a vein popping on his forehead.

The place we're about to go to is certainly not for playing, but even if we said so the hoodlum wouldn't accept that huh. On the contrary, even if we told the truth it would probably cause a needless misunderstanding. After all, we're basically going right to the center of the enemy camp.

「Eek, scary-y-y! Save me Shiro-chan!」

While demanding to be saved the Demon King clings to me without even the merest hint of fear in her voice. Bug off. However, I don't have any spare time either so I can't waste time arguing with the hoodlum here.

「Hey, there's no need for you to stay under someone like this. If you're annoyed then clearly say that you're annoyed.」

「Annoyed.」

It burns me to do as the hoodlum says, but I hate being clinged to so I tear away from her after saying that.

「Kadoom!」

Well, whatever. Maybe I should leave this thing behind after all. It's gotten annoying in all sorts of ways, so I ignore both the Demon King and the hoodlum and walk off.

「Oi, wait a sec!」

「Wait up, Shiro-chan!」

Ignore, ignore. I guess the hoodlum gave up and doesn't follow, but the damn Demon King grabs around my waist while following. Hey, my spine will break. I'm a bit irritated so I kick her to the ground. I seriously thought about just leaving her here, but it can't be helped so I grab her by the scruff of the neck and drag her along. It hasn't even gotten to the main event yet, so why do I have to be so worn out like this? I can tell that it's going to be a gruelling day.

Translation notes:

You can only answer “yes” or “yes, sir” - this is about the closest equivalent in English. In Japanese the two options given are literally はい (hai, yes in Japanese) or イエス (iesu, which is the phonetic spelling of “yes” in Japanese).

It's onomatopoeia theatre today with two direct references to specific sound effects. First up is “gaan” (kadoom) which is used to express shock or despair, generally with a comical undertone:

Next is “bikibiki” which is normally quite general purpose for something grinding, scraping or breaking but here it's more for someone's temper breaking:

The Second Informal Conference ①

Author's note: The pope's point of view.

「Hiya.」

My hopes were undermined right from the very start. Grandly so.

To the person who casually greeted me with a hand raised, I could only bow my head. I cannot allow my current expression to be seen. Even if it means that my subordinates see me bowing my head to the leader of the demons. Surely that is somewhat preferable to me showing them the expression of terror that appeared on my face, even if fleetingly.

「It has been a long time. Or maybe, how do you do, would be better perhaps.」

I smoothed over my expression, and gave that greeting in return after raising my head. The monster in the form of a girl in front of me, displayed an identical smile to the one she started with. Did she notice my terror perhaps, or maybe she noticed but is pretending not to perhaps? I fear it is the latter.

「It's the same either way, right? For now, let's get cracking.」

Compared to my recollection of her she is considerably more carefree, leaving me feeling lost. Beneath the smile pasted onto her face in the past, an unconcealable rage was burning. But, what I can feel from this person now, is a rather mellow emotion. Even still, that's only on the surface, and in her innermost heart she should still be boiling with hatred towards this world. After having lived for so long, it is probably a trivial matter for her speech and behaviour to have changed. At any rate, unlike myself, this person has been continuously alive without dying since before the System was put into operation after all - the oldest Divine Beast.

The oldest Divine Beast, the origin of spiders, Ariel-sama. Having lived since the time before the System was put into operation, the strongest existence within this world with the exception of the Administrators. After she had taken no major actions for a long time, I had never expected her to become the

Demon King of all things.

I feel such a fool. If I had only thought about it briefly I should have seen that this person has a connection to Shiro-sama, the Nightmare of the Labyrinth. Until this instant I had completely failed to perceive this.

Perhaps that is because I had perceived there to be hostility between the Nightmare of the Labyrinth and Ariel-sama. The last actions taken by Ariel-sama, that we have been able to verify, was an attack on a nest built by the Nightmare of the Labyrinth near the main town of the Keren territory in the country of Sariera. Thence, we can only presume that for some reason she was hostile towards the Nightmare of the Labyrinth who should have been a relative as a spider monster, but that is the last actions taken by Ariel-sama that we know of. After that, being unaware of any actions taken by Ariel-sama, we were under the impression that she had once again left the historical stage. I can only curse my own foolishness. The time when Ariel-sama had hidden herself, and the time when the Nightmare of the Labyrinth vanished are not quite the same, but they are close. During that time, it would not be strange for the two of them to have reconciled their hostility.

Thinking about it there are many points that are consistent with this. The relationship between the Nightmare of the Labyrinth and Ariel-sama. The new Demon King who completely reversed the previous generation's policy and pressed for military expansion. And most of all, the existence of someone significant enough for Black Dragon-sama to warn that she was "merciless". Line up all the points, and they become a line. It's as if what I couldn't see, suddenly came into view.

「Yahoo? How about coming back to the present?」

Ariel-sama claps her hands together while calling out to me. In real time the time I spent thinking should have been short, but it is likely that Ariel-sama realised that I had gotten lost in deep thought.

「Excuse me. This bad habit of mine is something I have not been able to cure no matter how many times I reincarnate.」

「I'd say that over-thinking things is bad. Why not empty your head a bit and take it easy?」

「I wish I could do such a thing.」

I sit down facing Ariel-sama who is resting her chin on one hand on the desk. While there were some who frowned at Ariel-sama's rudeness, nobody said anything, probably due to the effect of me bowing my head at the start. At the previous conference with Shiro-sama, I am sure that the others also understood just who was in the superior position. That Shiro-sama takes a seat besides Ariel-sama. By yielding the central seat to Ariel-sama, she probably intends for Ariel-sama to be the focus of the conference this time around.

「Then, let's get going. Though saying that, I haven't heard what's going to be discussed today. Is it really the case that there's mutual agreement on the main point of jointly bringing down the elves?」

Ariel-sama asks that while alternatively looking between Shiro-sama and myself. When Shiro-sama silently nods in assent, I followed that in assenting.

「That is indeed the case. To bring down the elves is one of my dearest wishes. If it is for making it possible to achieve that, then I am glad to cooperate.」

To be able to bring down the elves, or rather, their ringleader Potimas, could be said to be for the sake of the world as well. If it is for the sake of being able to kill him, then joining hands with the demons who should be our proper enemies is no hardship at all.

「Good, good. Then, let's go with that in regards to the elves. To put it bluntly, our preparations aren't ready yet anyway. We'll mobilise as soon as the situation allows, pretty much I guess. Is that okay?」

「Yes.」

Even if we were told to immediately take action we wouldn't be able to move that quickly. Ariel-sama's proposal is a godsend.

「Okay, next. So, this time the demons will be waging a large scale war, but how does the Divine Word Religion intend to act with regards to that?」

While disclosing the future actions of the demons as if lightly gossiping, Ariel-sama asks about our actions.

「I regret to say this, but that is beyond the scope of our agreement. We have no reason to disclose that.」

It must be remembered that our cooperation is only in regards to bringing down the elves. How the demons intend to attack is beyond the scope of that. As such, I cannot just simply hand over our information. I am sure that they understand that as well. At any rate, that should be why Shiro-sama had previously informed us about the future movements of the demons at least. In doing so, perhaps by causing the human side to also prepare for war, I can see her scheme to increase the number of casualties on both sides. In that case, she should also want the humans to seriously desire for war. Even if we refuse to disclose information, that also has the effect of declaring the intent of the Divine Word Religion to face this battle with all our might, which should be in accordance with Ariel-sama and co. It would not lead to the agreement being broken.

「Fine then.」

As I expected, Ariel-sama readily nods in agreement without any indication that her mood was harmed.

「Hrm. Well, yeah, I guess we wouldn't be able to disclose such information either. I'll tell you this just in case though - that neither Shiro-chan or I are intending to personally get involved in the battles, so don't worry. We'll only push the course of action down the route of demons and humans killing each other. If you lot are saying you want to preserve your war potential as much as possible then we won't force you to participate. Though that does mean that the damage to the humans will likely be greater.」

While saying that she wouldn't disclose information, Ariel-sama tells us something valuable. That Ariel-sama and Shiro-sama won't participate directly is significant information. If those two participated in the war, the humans would inevitably be crushed. However, so long as that's not the case, the war is worthwhile.

「Ahh, excuse me a minute? For that war, I intend to participate on the demon side, so best regards in future.」

However, as if to dash my hopes, Wrath-dono makes that statement.

Translation notes:

With regards to Ariel being called “merciless” by Kuro, see the chapter translated by turb0 called “The Pope and the Administrator”.

The Second Informal Conference ②

Note: This chapter is from Wrath's point of view, though the author doesn't specifically say so.

At my declaration, the expressions on the Divine Word Religion members changed for the worse. I guess I should say that it's expected that the pope is the only one not to show discomposure. Kusama is completely and utterly astonished.

However, my real interest isn't with those on the Divine Word Religion side, but those seated on the same side as me. I sneak a peek at the expressions of those members. Sophia-san has "What's this guy saying, is he a fool, does he want to die?" plainly written on her face. Since she readily shows whatever she's thinking on her face, she's easy to understand. The problem, is the remaining two. In Shiro-san's case, I guess it's no surprise that she shows absolutely no reaction. Nothing ever troubles her. In comparison, Demon King Ariel-san has a grin on the side of her mouth.

This morning was the first time I met with this Demon King. Until then I'd only heard about the Demon King from Shiro-san and Sophia-san, but today was the first time I met her in person. I'd only heard about the existence of the Demon King from Shiro-san, but I had heard a few more details from Sophia-san. According to Sophia-san, she was saved by her as an infant when her life was threatened, and is a kind and gentle person who took good care of her afterwards.

My impression on meeting her for real, was pretty much the exact opposite of what Sophia-san said. By any stretch of the imagination, this is not a kind and gentle person. Or rather, not even a person.

「Hey hey, nice to meet you. I'm Ariel. I'm the Demon King kinda thing. Feel free to call me Ariel-chan okay!」

Towards Ariel-san who gave that merry self-introduction, I did not have the courage to call her with -chan as she herself had hoped for. I was at my

absolute limit trying suppress my face from twitching. Even without Appraisal, with just one glance at the something before me in the form of a girl, I fully realised that this was an existence far beyond my own. Also, I fully realised that Ariel-san is absolutely not the kind and gentle person that Sophia-san spoke of at all. This is because, though intangible, around her there was something like a dense putrid smell of corpses coming from the many lives she had taken. Of course, there was no such actual smell. However, because I myself have taken many lives, I can somehow discern those of the same kind. In addition, there's no comparison to me in terms of how thick that putrid smell is around her.

Sophia-san, the god called Kuro, Shiro-san. They are the ones who I've met that are above me. Amongst those, Ariel-san is the one who gives off the greatest sense of mortal dread. Most likely, in the sense of pure combat strength, Kuro and Shiro-san are ones who would be declared the winners. However, I can't feel any hesitation from Ariel-san. Hesitation to kill, that is.

An anxiety in a different sense to what I feel from Shiro-san. The anxiety I feel about Shiro-san, is the anxiety of not being able to read what she's thinking. However, the anxiety I feel about Ariel-san, is the opposite. The anxiety that I know exactly what she's thinking of. Ariel-san has a clear purpose, and is not hiding her intent to kill. If there is someone who will oppose her objective, I'm convinced that she will remove them without hesitation.

That being the case, I have two paths to choose from. Either to carefully observe without doing anything or getting involved, or to cooperate. I chose to cooperate, with Ariel-san and consequently with Shiro-san.

It would be a lie to say that I had no doubts. Shiro-san is still hiding something for a start, and I myself don't know if this is the right choice. However, it's about time that I made a decision and took some kind of action. The pope in front of me said it before - to be diligent so as not to pile up corpses for no reason. I too, want to choose a path where all the people I've killed didn't die for nothing. That's just for my ego. That's not anything that the people I killed would agree with. Even so, I think it's better than doing nothing. Even if as a result, I'll likely get my hands even dirtier from more mass killings.

「So there you have it - do your best, humans. If you're careless then maybe Wrath-kun will annihilate everything by himself you know.」

With an amused expression, Ariel-san incites the Divine Word Religion members with their already pale faces. She shouldn't have known that I was actually going to make such a declaration, yet she advances the negotiations without revealing her own thoughts about it at all. As I thought, I must be careful not to be deceived by her appearance and casual manner.

「So with that, I guess that's everything that needs to be discussed, right? To be honest, apart from attacking the elves we should naturally be mutual enemies anyway. Ah, as for getting touch in future, I'll leave this kid with you so if anything happens then could you say something to her?」

Saying so, Ariel-san summons a single monster. That monster looks like a girl at first glance, but looking closely I can see that it's an elaborately made doll.

「A Puppet Taratekt is it. However, compared to the ones I saw previously it is far more elaborate in appearance is it not.」

While saying words seemingly of praise or astonishment, the pope closely observes the monster that Ariel-san summoned.

「Nice isn't it? It was jointly developed by Shiro-chan and I you know?」

「I see. We have no objection on our side.」

「Good, good. Okay then, I'll leave her with you until it's time to attack the elves. In the meantime, feel free to use her however you like.」

「Please take good care of me.」

This so-called Puppet Taratekt bows at the waist and gives a greeting. Seemingly never expecting it to be able to talk, the pope shows a surprised expression for an instant.

「With Shiro-chan's magic remodelling our doll is without equal in being able to talk. Well, it has general capabilities, so feel free to use it as a maid or for combat.」

「This is an unexpected gift to receive, no doubt.」

While the pope is saying that, I'm sure that nobody thinks that this is a present out of pure good will. Ariel-san is blatantly infiltrating them with something like a spy after all. If the Divine Word Religion makes any kind of suspicious movements, then Ariel-san will be able to immediately know of it. Going by what I can see, the Puppet Taratekt has a considerably high combat

potential. Should circumstances require it, I think this single monster could probably even take control of the center of the Divine Word Religion by itself. If something happens, it will surely become a threat. Yet, the Divine Word Religion cannot object to it. If they objected, then they don't know what further threats they would face from Ariel-san.

「Then, this conference is over! Dustin, lend me your ear for a bit. There's something personal I'd like to discuss.」

Ariel-san moves to lead out the pope while smiling. As relaxed as if inviting a friend for a drink. However, considering the twitch that showed on the pope's face for an instant, nobody would think it was for a valid reason. While I'm sure that the pope isn't about to die here, I'm also sure that it won't be gentle on the pope either.

「So then, wait up for me Shiro-chan and co.」

Before getting the pope's agreement, Ariel-san gets up and leaves the conference room. Shiro-san sees her off in silence, and Sophia-san doesn't know what to do either and doesn't move. In that case, I guess I'll talk to Kusama for a bit then. I greet Kusama, and leave the conference room.

Translation notes:

“To be diligent so as not to pile up corpses for no reason” - the words used aren't quite the same but this is probably a reference to the pope's line near the end of Informal Conference ⑧.

The Demon King And The Pope

Author's note: The pope's point of view.

「Did it surprise you that I'd become the Demon King?」

On entering my private room, Ariel-sama took a wine bottle out from the rack as if familiar with the place, and then began to drink straight from the bottle. I had never invited Ariel-sama to this room even once, but since it's her it wouldn't be strange if she's used to the layout of places like this I guess. Seeing her consume someone else's drink without hesitation, I guess this is the pride of the absolute being who stands at the summit of this world. That wine is something precious that I'll never be able to get more of, but I guess there's no help for it.

「I certainly was. I am sure that Shiro-sama also kept quiet about it to surprise me. How naughty of her.」

Truly, I hadn't even imagined that Ariel-sama would actually become the likes of the Demon King. Regarding the Nightmare of the Labyrinth incident, I first heard about it only when this person began to take action. That indicates just how significant the meaning is of this person becoming the Demon King.

「Oh. Rather than thinking that way, Shiro-chan probably didn't mention it because it was a bother, or because she simply forgot, one of those two I guess? I don't understand Shiro-chan's thinking either, but there probably wasn't any deep meaning regarding this.」

If Ariel-sama would say that, then I shall leave it there. I should have been able to discern that Ariel-sama had become the Demon King based on the fragmentary information. That I didn't realise it is merely due to my inadequate imagination. Despite knowing the importance of information, I was a fool not to be able to determine the real situation from the gathered information. In no way am I criticizing Shiro-sama. In the first place, Shiro-sama is a person on the side of the demons. There is no obligation for her to inform us as representatives of the humans with regards to information on the demons.

「Well then. I am sure that you did not call me in order to gossip. Please speak about the matter.」

「Hmm. In my case, I would enjoy speaking about the old days though.」

Ignoring my urging, Ariel-sama tips up the wine bottle. Her slender throat heartily rises and falls, and the contents of the bottle empties.

「Pwah! Delicious!」

「Even amongst my collection that is an item of rare quality after all.」

「I am the Ruler of Gluttony in the end you know. I have a keen nose for the good stuff.」

In a good humour, she stirs the wine up even further.

「Dustin. Won't you change your mind?」

Quietly, in a small voice that I almost fail to hear it, she enquires that. My response is a given.

「It is too late for that. Since the start, I never had the right to choose my answer. That is not something allowed for this fool who abandoned the Goddess, choosing to take the path where the humans survive. I have no right to choose another path.」

「I see.」

Silence. Only the solitary sound of Ariel-sama drinking the wine resounds.

「For those who know the past, it's just us, Gyuri and Potimas now. The ones that I knew have sacrificed themselves, the lot of them.」

「Those personages were magnificent.」

「Magnificent or not, once they've gone there's no meaning to it. Sariel-sama wouldn't have wished for that.」

「Even so. Those personages, following their own conviction, continued to resist this world to the end. I am envious of them. Though even thinking that, is probably something unpardonable for me.」

Ariel-sama's former comrades, were strong. Not just in combat ability, but their hearts. Perhaps it could be said that their strong hearts themselves were the key to their strength. The act of wanting to save the Goddess, that very belief.

However, they are no longer with us. They cannot even reincarnate. Because they sacrificed everything, including their very souls.

「Well, in the end, I too am about to take actions against Sariel-sama's will, so I guess I have no right to talk about them.」

Ariel-sama said that as if seemingly lonely. Following Sariel-sama's will, the only one to adhere to that until now, the oldest Divine Beast who continued to watch over the world. To take actions against that will, just how much conflict is within her I wonder. I cannot even imagine that.

「I will kill Potimas.」

A flat voice. It is said that when the urge to kill someone becomes too great, conversely one's emotions become vacant. Potimas has gone too far. In spite of having already earned Ariel-sama's wrath, he actually provoked her even further.

「Neither of us are able to compromise with each other.」

「Of course.」

Putting aside everything that happened in the past and joining our hands together, is no longer possible for us. Ariel-sama and I, have already walked too far down our paths of no return. While we accept each other, those paths can never reach the same conclusion. Even still, on just this occasion we are able to cooperate together. The enemy of my enemy is my friend, huh, a saying from Sajin's world.

「Afterwards, shall we grandly kill each other or what?」

「I humbly wish to decline.」

Those words were said as a joke. However, that is a future that could well happen after the elves are taken down. We are able to cooperate for now. However, we're still mutual enemies. No matter how far we go, we cannot come together. In that case, we must settle our dispute. For Ariel-sama to have become the Demon King, that was surely to put an end to a particular matter. Once that happens, I will only be an obstacle to Ariel-sama. In which case, conflict is inevitable. With the current Ariel-sama having decided to take actions against Sariel-sama's will, the mere concept of being careful does not exist. I'm sure she will wage her entire soul.

Terrifying. Our chances of winning, is equivalent to none. Even so, I must oppose her. For the sake of all humans. I swore to protect the humans even if it meant committing blasphemy against the Goddess, in order to continue what I had begun long ago.

「Thanks for the drink.」

Ariel-sama places down the empty wine bottle. A wine bottle with a magnificent label, but without any content. To that thing that was like myself, I felt an empty laugh rising up.

The Oni And The Ninja

Author's note: oni-kun's point of view.

After leaving the conference room, I was led to Kusama's private room. In size, I guess it was about 6 tatami or so. However, because clothes and all sorts of mysterious objects of uncertain usage are scattered over the place, I feel that the usable space is rather cramped. To put it bluntly, it's a mess. Heck, I can't even see the floor.

「Kusama, tidy the place up.」

「Sorry, sorry. It's not like I've ever had anyone over before, you see.」

Kusama makes a little unabashed laugh, and my anger fades away.

「Anyway, let's sit?」

Pushing aside a heap of rubbish, I take out a chair. Since there doesn't seem to be anywhere else to sit other than the bed, I'll gratefully sit here. Sure enough, Kusama sits down on the bed. There's nowhere else to sit after all.

「Anyway, it's been a long time.」

「Yeah. In the previous conference we had no chance to talk after all.」

During the previous conference, though we did meet face to face, we withdrew without exchanging even a few words. Yet, since my previous life this is the first time that I've had a conversation like this. It really can be said to have been a long time. Particularly in my case as a male reincarnator, this is the first time with someone I'm relatively friendly with. With both Shiro-san and Sophia-san, it's not like I interacted with them in my previous incarnation for a start, and I've not had any kind of friendly conversations with them either, so for some reason I have this deep emotion welling up within me at this reunion.

「It seriously has been a long time, yeah. What have you been up to until now?」

「That will be a long story I guess.」

Many things have happened to me in this world. If I start to talk about that, it

will take up a lot of time. I want to enjoy having a conversation with a friend in this reunion after such a long time, but it's not like I can just talk forever. Besides, at any rate, talking about my past will make for a gloomy conversation. Since there's this chance, I'd rather not make the mood gloomy.

「I mean, are you seriously going to participate in the war together with the demons?」

「I am serious about doing so.」

「Ehh. Don't go there. War and stuff is madness, right.」

Seeing Kusama's face showing his objection from the bottom of his heart, a bitter smile came out. It seems that Kusama hasn't yet experienced harsh circumstances like I did. That attitude of avoiding war, makes me envious, or perhaps he's blindingly pure compared to me.

「You won't participate, Kusama?」

「No way, no way. Being in a war is like repeatedly asking to be killed right. If I was about to be forced into it I would flee instead. Ah, this is off-the-record okay.」

Considering that he is a member of the core of the Divine Word Religion which is an organisation that could be said to represent humanity, he sure seems to be pretty casual about refusing to participate in war. I guess it's nice to be free. Despite all that, I bet that when the moment arises he would go with the flow and actually start participating in the war. That's the kind of guy Kusama is. Taking a "if you can't beat them join them" attitude, he then tries to steal the show, but gets the short end of the stick instead. That sort of guy.

「At any rate, during the conference, weren't you rather too nervous?」

「Idiot! It'd be impossible for me not to be nervous in a place like that, right! Why did I have to be there? I was seriously sticking out like a sore thumb you know.」

I'm relieved to see that he still has his lower class attitude. He sure hasn't changed. As he himself would say, Kusama would get nervous just from being embarrassed during class at school, so it might be unfair to expect such a person to not be nervous during that tense atmosphere during the conference.

「Rather, to be able to boldly make that statement in such a place, you're

amazing.」

「Haha. Maybe that was a case of being numb with fear though.」

Perhaps that could also be called a form of desperation. Despite how it looked though, in a different sense to Kusama, I made that statement while considerably nervous. The nervousness that if I made one wrong move then I might be erased.

「Say, Sasa-yan.」

Kusama called me the same way he used to before.

「Ah, sorry. I'd prefer to be called "Wrath", please.」

It felt nice to be called the same way that Kusama used to call me before. However, I don't want to call myself by my old name after all. If I had to say it, it might be a rather trivial hangup, but no matter what, I really don't think I have the right to call myself by the name my parents gave me in the old world or this world.

「Sasa-yan, when did you become chuunibyou?」

「It's not something like that though. There's some rather complicated reasons but if possible I don't want to be called by my real name.」

「Hmmm. Well, if you say so.」

It's not like he actually understood, but Kusama still accepted it. However, chuunibyou huh? Sophia-san also called me that, depressingly.

「Ah, by the way Sasa, er no, Wrath? I really hope not, but don't tell me you and Wakaba-san are dating or something, right?」

「Huh?」

「Don't "huh" me! What the heck is with you standing beside the school's lovely goddess Wakaba-san! If the others knew of this, wouldn't you be killed!? Even if you're not actually dating!」

Er, ahh. Certainly Shiro-san, or rather Wakaba-san in her previous life was popular. However, because of this feel about her that she was virtually impossible to approach, there wasn't anyone who would confess or similar to her, and instead it was the case that she was worshipped from a distance. If anyone tried to get close to that Wakaba-san, they'd probably be faced with

murderous intent by some of those worshippers.

「It's okay. It's not that kind of sweet relationship.」

Based on what I know of the current Shiro-san, even in a worst case scenario I won't gain such feelings for her I'm sure.

「Right then. In that case keep a lookout so that no strange bugs approach Wakaba-san! I can rely on you, right!」

「Sure, Sure.」

I'll just go with the flow in response here. I bet that even if I did nothing, I doubt Shiro-san would be able to get a boyfriend anyway. Shiro-san doesn't seem to be interested in such things for a start.

「By the way, whether it's Wakaba-san, or whether it's Sasa er Wrath, why are your faces unchanged since before? As far as I know everyone who is reborn should have a different face though.」

「I don't really understand it myself.」

It's not like I wished for my face to be like this for a start.

「The point we have in common, would be both Shiro-san and I were originally monsters I guess. Maybe if you evolve from a monster to a human form you get your previous life's face or something?」

「Speaking of which, the old geezer did seem to say that Wakaba-san was a monster called the Nightmare of the Labyrinth.」

「Old geezer?」

「The pope.」

How can this guy call the leader of a large organisation "old geezer" when he was so nervous sitting in that conference? I don't really understand the difference between such things.

「I've only heard about it myself, but is it true that Wakaba-san committed something extreme?」

「It's true. Enough that it's rather scary.」

I feel bad for shattering Kusama's delusions about Shiro-san, but it's certainly the truth that Shiro-san is involved with all sorts of shady things. I've heard her say from her own mouth that she's committed massacres for a start, and

declare that she will commit more in future as well. I can't even stop that, and I'll be in a position to contribute towards that as well.

「To think Wakaba-san would. Well, I guess that's okay.」

How's that okay?

「Don't you think that whatever Wakaba-san wants to do is probably okay?」

「Is that really how it is?」

Certainly, since her previous existence Wakaba-san has been wrapped in mystery though.

「I feel that she's changed after being reborn though.」

「Well of course. More than ten years have passed, yeah? Of course she'd change.」

「In that sense, you haven't changed much though, Kusama.」

Having dug his own grave, Kusama collapses on the bed. Instead, I actually feel relieved that Kusama's attitude hasn't really changed though.

「Talking of having changed, that darn Rihoko, hasn't she changed too much?」

「Oh my? Who you might be referring to there, I wonder?」

To Kusama's seemingly reminiscing words, the voice of a third party responds. Almost as if I can hear a creaking sound, Kusama slowly turns his head around, and with a similar feeling I look over my shoulder. Standing there, with an incredibly scary expression on her face, is Sophia-san.

Translation notes:

In Japan, rooms are often measured in terms of the number of tatami mats that would be required to cover the floor, often a whole number. For a home, 6 tatami would be about 2.73m by 3.64m (9ft by 12ft).

“Sasa-yan” - Wrath's full name in his previous existence is 笹島京也 - Sasajima Kyouya. Sasa-yan (笹やん) uses the first kanji of Sasajima. It's pretty common to make up nicknames like this.

“Strange bugs” - not in the literal meaning. Wrath is basically being asked to guard “Wakaba-san” against anyone attracted to her making an approach.

“Rihoko” - Sophia's old nickname. “Ri” for “real”, “ho” for “horror” and “ko”

being a common ending for girl's names - ie "real horror girl".

The Vampire, The Oni And The Ninja

Author's note: vampire girl's point of view.

During my previous incarnation, I knew that I was secretly called Rihoko. Real horror girl. Rihoko, for short. I don't know who started calling me that. Not in the least bit amusing, a nickname that purely holds me in contempt.

That is what the boy in front of me put into words. During the previous conference he introduced himself as a reincarnator already, so it's no surprise that he knows about me. However, given that I didn't reveal my name from my previous existence, why is this guy speaking that name?

「Hey? If you just freeze I won't understand though? Just who might you be talking about?」

When I tried cross-examining him while being coercive, the boy, I think it was Kusama-kun, made an amusingly cramped face. Kyouya-kun who is also looking over his shoulder at me, made an “uh oh” expression as well.

「If you just stay silent I won't understand, right? Hurry up and say it.」

When I tried increasing the threatening further, Kusama-kun's face turns pale and he sinks into silence. Damn. Threatening had the opposite effect it seems. Kusama-kun was the type to sink into silence when he was at a disadvantage I believe.

This is getting annoying so I'll just use Charm I guess? Temporarily putting Charm on him seems like the quickest way to get him to confess everything he knows.

Perhaps he guessed my disquieting thoughts, as Kusama-kun prostrated himself. A dogeza.

「Sorry excuse me please forgive me!」

While doing a dogeza on the bed Kusama-kun gives a full apology, speaking without pause. Somehow, after seeing that pitiful figure I lost the inclination to cross-examine him. That being said, I'm certainly still furious, so if I let him off

the hook here I won't be able to calm down.

I move to stand in front of the kneeling Kusama-kun, and force his head to look up at me. When our eyes meet, I smile sweetly.

「Ehe?」

When Kusama-kun responds with a tight ingratiating smile, I instantly bite into the nape of his neck, which has cold sweat slowly running down it.

「Hogeh!?!」

I suck up the blood that flows out from where I stabbed into with my fangs. However, that was also for an instant, as right away my shoulder was grabbed from behind and I was pulled back. As I expected, when I turned around there was Kyouya-kun with a grim face.

「Ooh? Ooohh? Oohhhh.....」

Kusama-kun's mouth opens and closes like a goldfish while meaningless moans rise out. I lick off the blood trickling around my mouth, and turn my gaze to Kyouya-kun.

「I just took a little blood. With this I shall forgive his slander. Got a problem?」

Kyouya-kun seemed to be about to say something, but perhaps he also thought that Kusama-kun was at fault, as he mutely releases his hand from my shoulder and sighs.

「Sasa-yan, I somehow feel, a new door opening within me.」

「Don't. That mustn't be opened.」

While pressing a hand onto his neck where I bit him, this pervert is spouting nonsense. Well, apparently it feels good to be bitten by a vampire so maybe it's too much to call him a pervert.

「So? How exactly did you know it was me?」

「Ah, yes. We've been keeping records of what's been happening with the reincarnators after creating a list of all the classmates, so we know about the current state of most of the reincarnators. Using that, by a process of elimination, we could confirm who was who, yes.」

「Meaning, most of the class have been found then?」

To Kusama-kun's reply, Kyouya-kun responded. Unlike me, Kyouya-kun had friends, and maybe there's someone he'd like to meet.

「Yeah. The majority are at the elf village though, but Ogi infiltrated and was able to determine the identity of everyone there. There's also several enrolled in the academy at a neighbouring country, and we've also identified them. Then, at the previous conference there was the three of you reincarnators right? Certainly we hadn't identified you yet, and the list wasn't completed yet, but I could tell who Sasa, er, Wrath was from his face, and the same with Wakaba-san. Then, since it seemed that the only girl who hadn't been found was Negishi-san, by a process of elimination I figured she was probably Negishi-san.」

「Ogi did?」

「Ah, I shouldn't have said that.」

I wonder if this guy's okay? I feel that he just leaked some pretty important information without batting an eyelid though.

「P, please act like you didn't hear that. Okay? Okay?」

「Sure. Well, we're already cooperating with regards to the elves so I guess it's probably okay?」

「Yes! Safe!」

You're not safe. While Kyouya-kun did say that it's okay he didn't say anything about not having heard it. This guy might be hopeless.

「Incidentally, is it possible to show me that list?」

「Sure, no problem. I have a copy, so wait a sec.」

Saying so Kusama-kun moved aside a pile of rubbish. Is this really okay? Isn't that more or less some kind of secret document? Just because we're all reincarnators here surely that doesn't mean it's okay to blithely hand it over so easily?

「Found it, found it. I have pen and paper so feel free to make a copy.」

I'm not particularly interested, but Kyouya-kun is making a copy of that paper with a serious expression. He's completely different to me who has no lingering attachment to my previous life.

「Thank you. You were a great help.」

「You're welcome!」

Kyouya-kun hands back the original note to Kusama-kun.

「Afterwards, I'll have to show this to Shiro-san as well.」

Somehow or other I give a start when that name is said. Ah, that's right. I was told by goshujin-sama that they're going to return so I need to fetch Kyouya-kun. This is bad. With everything that was going on here quite a lot of time has elapsed. Goshujin-sama might be getting irritated at having to wait about now.

「Kyouya-kun, if you're done then it's about time we return. Ariel-san and the others are already waiting.」

「Sophia-san, how many times do I have to tell you that I don't want to be called by my name?」

I ignore what Kyouya-kun is saying with a frown. Since I'm deliberately calling him Kyouya-kun as harassment, there's no way I'd stop if asked is there.

「Let's go already. If you don't come then you'll be left here.」

I promptly turn around and head towards the previous conference room. Outside the door is a person from the church who guided me here. Not only that, I sense the presence of what feels like human dark-ops hiding in the shadows monitoring us, but I'll ignore them unless they make a move on us. There's no way that they would allow an outsider, or rather someone who could practically be called an enemy, to walk around freely without monitoring them. I'm sure that they heard the conversation in Kusama-kun's room as well. Kusama-kun, are you going to be okay? I'm sure you won't be killed, but you'll probably be severely scolded at least. Well, it's nothing to do with me. I expel Kusama-kun's situation from my mind and quickly head back to where goshujin-sama is.

Pope「Our ninja is so rubbish that it's dangerous.」

Translation notes:

“A new door opening within me” - this is pretty abstract in the literal sense but the implication is that he feels he's “awakening” to a new experience or feeling. However, this does also somewhat imply that this is something shady.

Chapter 266 - Didn't Even Need To Be Here

「Umm, in the end, why was I brought here exactly?」

Felmina-chan asks me that in an awfully forlorn voice. Yep. She didn't even need to be here. I didn't even speak a single word this time. I guess we were unnecessary weren't we? Yep yep. Us unnecessary comrades might as well be air.

Sensing that I wasn't going to reply, Felmina-chan sinks into silence as if giving up. During the conference itself she might as well been air, but even when that was over the sense of her existence was still gone. This girl, seems to have talent for espionage.

Felmina-chan was abandoned by her fiancé, and after that I picked her up and reforged her, but instead of pure combat skills, I'm glad that I had her develop skills that seemed useful for espionage and intelligence gathering. Unlike a certain meido-sama from somewhere, she's not at the level where you can lose sight of her when she's right in front of you though, but she is able to make the sense of her existence quite thin. Clearly enough for her to fade from awareness and her existence to be forgotten. Normally that probably wouldn't be enough to deceive the eyes of the members of this conference, but under the cover of the impact of the Demon King she erased the sense of her existence, so she wasn't spotted by any key figures. Muhaha, this girl who I've tempered thoroughly, is superior to their ninja-kun.

That ninja-kun aka Kusama-kun, has gone off somewhere together with oni-kun. The two of them were pretty good friends, so I guess they're renewing their old friendship or something. There is a sense that the Demon King will return soon, so I sent vampire girl, who was glowering at all the Divine Word Religion members, to go fetch them. If I'd let her remain as is, then it seems like the life span of the Divine Word Religion people would have reduced. The moment that vampire girl left the room, they were noticeably relieved after all.

Thus the current situation, with the scowling vampire girl having left, the Divine Word Religion members are now glancing towards me. What about

Felmina-chan? With that beautiful “I’m air” technique, those glances are passing right over her splendidly. Umm. All these oji-sans are glancing at me. Somehow, I feel a bit uncomfortable.

The conference this time was, amazingly enough, a huge success. Somehow, it was managed entirely by the Demon King and moved along quickly. I just had to sit and stare vacantly. To think that that Demon King could be useful in such a place. Thinking that she was just some NEET, I feel cheated somehow. Thanks to her I was able to be at ease.

And yet, what’s with this situation? To be honest, I feel uncomfortable enough that I want to return home, but it’s not like I can return without the Demon King *etc.* Without my teleportation, it would be impossible for them to return to the demon territory from here. Which is why I gotta wait, but this waiting time is agonising. Demon King, oni-kun, vampire girl, come back quickly.

「Umm.」

They came! I knew it! As expected, the fact that they stayed behind meant that they’d definitely try to talk to me about something! Otherwise, they would have left their seats long ago after all.

The one who began to talk to me, was one of the younger members amongst the oji-sans. I guess he’s in his thirties? Because he introduced himself during the previous conference, I do more or less know his name and position. He’s one of the generals commanding an army.

「That puppet, what exactly is it?」

He asks while pointing at the puppet spider that is waiting behind me. Oh, this.

The puppet spider that the Demon King summoned, as indicated by the name of Puppet Taratekt, is a monster from the Taratekt family. With a puppet like outer shell wrapped around, the main body is a spider in the chest region the size of a fist. That spider, using the threads spread out through the interior of the puppet and able to move by pulling on the reeling threads, is the real part of this monster. The manipulated puppet is like the crust of the main body. Like the shell of the hermit crab.

This puppet spider, is actually under the Demon King's control, and is the next strongest to the Queen Taratekt. The average status values are around 10,000. It's beyond even the Arch Taratekt. On the occasion when I fought the Demon King before my apotheosis, ten of these were summoned at the same time and beat the crap out of me.

They might have been puppet spiders then, but in the past their form wasn't so similar to humans. When I was beaten up, they had the outward appearance of something like a department store mannequin. However, because that's not beautiful, I performed magical remodelling and that's how it gained the current form. The exposed joints in the arms and legs have a coating over them so that you wouldn't notice with a glance. The face is now built with fine details, remodelled to the extent that it can even blink, believe it or not. On top of that, with the vocal cords being reproduced it is an ambitious work that even has the ability to converse! Every home should have a puppet spider. Capable of doing domestic chores or real combat or whatever takes your fancy!

Actually, I feel that I overdid it a bit. Although there's no change in status values, on top of it becoming far more human-like in appearance, because the joints are made to be able to move much more smoothly it's now able to do detailed work. As a result, it's become able to master things like cooking and sewing that it couldn't do before. Scary. It has more femininity than an unskilled human girl.

「I am a variety of demon called a Puppet Taratekt. My name is Ael. In accordance with Ariel-sama's order, I shall be under your care for a while. During that time, please feel free to use me however you wish. I look forwards to working with you.」

As seen, it can even respond perfectly! Even if I wasn't here, it has the capability to judge when to make a self-introduction. Wonderful. Huh? Doesn't this mean that there was genuinely no need for me to be here? I'm just the transport? The Divine Word Religion people's interest is now towards the puppet spider Ael, and until the Demon King and co return, Felmina-chan and I both become air. In it's own way, this is rather incomprehensible.

Translation notes:

Ael talks using very humble language, suitable for a maid working for a noble. When Shiro is explaining the Puppet Taratekt, she starts using marketing and salesman type language.

Chapter 267 - The Current State Of Affairs Of The Reincarnators

「Shiro-san, can you spare some of your time?」

Immediately on returning home from the Divine Word Religion's place, I was called out to by oni-kun. To be honest, since I still have work to do for the 10th Army that the Demon King forced onto me, I can't say that I have much time really, but since oni-kun has an awfully serious expression on his face it seems that I better give priority to this. I had wanted to ask him about his real intentions anyway after he suddenly announced his participation in the war, so this might be convenient.

And so, I have Felmina-chan return first, pushing the work onto her. Do your best, Felmina-chan. Seeing Felmina-chan leave with a resentful expression, vampire girl looks on with an elated expression for some reason. Then, she follows after us for some reason as if it was completely natural. What does this girl want to do?

「So? Where are you going?」

And why are you also here as if it was obvious, Demon King? I was tempted to make a retort but it's getting ridiculous so I decide to let it pass, but I'm just going to talk with oni-kun okay? It's probably not going to be that interesting, okay?

So, for some reason we come to the Demon King's room. Oni-kun had also showed a bewildered look as first, but on seeing my attitude of resignation, it seems he sensed something. After breathing out a sigh, he began to talk.

「First of all, here. This is information on the state of the reincarnators as determined by the Divine Word Religion. Kusama let me see it.」

While saying so, what he handed to me was a simple written memo. The contents were as oni-kun said, concisely written accounts of the current circumstances of the reincarnators as determined by the Divine Word Religion.

Woah. To be honest, I might have taken the Divine Word Religion's information gathering ability a bit lightly. This memo which has the names of all the classmates written on it, has almost perfectly accurate information within it.

Including sensei, the five enrolled at the human academy. The twelve at the elf village. The two living freely as adventurers. And, Kusama-kun. Vampire girl and oni-kun are also included. The only ones unidentified are the three dead. Since they're dead they can't be investigated, so I guess you could say that they've investigated almost everything that can be investigated?

As for Ogiwara-kun being a spy of the Divine Word Religion in the elf village, I pretty much knew that already, but it seems that they've gotten all sorts of information from there. Or rather, isn't this information that mustn't be revealed so easily? Kusama-kun, you were okay with handing this over to oni-kun? Well, it's not something for me to worry about I guess.

I can comprehend them knowing about the internal conditions of the elf village, but to think that they even knew about the adventuring duo who were moving around. It's formidable indeed, the Divine Word Religion's intelligence network. It seems that Kusama-kun understood about oni-kun by seeing his face, and in vampire girl's case there's an annotation about who she probably is based upon a process of elimination. The reason why it's merely a "probability", is due to the exception of Ooshima-kun whose gender had changed, I guess. It's not like there was no chance that vampire girl could have also been a reincarnator whose gender had changed after all. Well, normally they'd have been correct though.

「How does this compare to the information you'd gotten hold of, Shiro-san?」

Hrm. Oni-kun is attempting to search around for it, but come to think of it, I hadn't told him much information about the other reincarnators had I. Not much more than saying that Yamada-kun and Ooshima-kun were enrolled at a human academy, huh? There's not really any problem with informing him, so okay.

I write out a few extra details on the memo, and return it to oni-kun. I've written all the information I know about the reincarnators. That being said, the only other significant information that I knew about, was that the three who

the Divine Word Religion hadn't identified were dead. On receiving the memo back, oni-kun scanned over the extra details, and afterwards closed his eyes for a short while. Perhaps he's praying for the dead three to find happiness in the next world.

「Is this everything you know, Shiro-san?」

I nod. I've been monitoring the reincarnators by using my clones, so I also know about various everyday details, but reporting all that would take forever anyway. Just think of it as me having written almost all the important information. For example, Ooshima-kun being gender-bent.

「This information about Ooshima Kanata now being female - is it really true?」

Ah, so you're going to ask about that after all? Well, yeah. Ooshima-kun and oni-kun were good friends, yeah. You'd be curious about it, yeah.

「He's become a beautiful girl.」

Towards my indirect response, oni-kun makes a complicated expression. Even vampire girl, who hadn't shown much concern for the reincarnators and hadn't participated in the conversation, makes a “^” expression with her mouth. Even as a joke good girls shouldn't make such a face! But, it's not like I don't understand vampire girl's feelings. Conversely, the Demon King's eyes are sparkling for some reason.

「I see, I see-e.」

Oni-kun mutters that with his mind still in a mess. Yup. It seems that it's just as well that I didn't mention that recently Ooshima-kun is starting to become conscious of Yamada-kun little by little. He's already shocked that his once male friend has become female before he knew it, so if he found out that she's begun to fall in love with his other friend, it'd overload his mental capacity. I can vividly imagine a certain D from somewhere enjoying such a scene.

Vampire girl nonchalantly snatches the memo from the stricken oni-kun, and reads it with little apparent interest. It's kinda like, “I'm not really interested but I guess I'm a reincarnator still so I'll take a look at least”, I suppose. The proof, is that she returns it to oni-kun after only glancing at it for a short time. For vampire girl, being a reincarnator is nothing more than a minor detail of her

past, so they probably feel like complete strangers to her.

The memo that vampire girl had returned, is snatched from oni-kun's hands a second time. By the Demon King's hands. The Demon King might have a bit of my soul mixed in, but since she's a resident of this world I didn't expect her to have much interest in the reincarnators though.

「Shiro-chan, are there any who could become a threat to the demons from your point of view?」

Ahh, so she's interested in them from that perspective huh. If possible I want my fellow reincarnators to have peaceful lives, but I'm sure the Demon King won't show any mercy if they seem to be hostile.

「Yamada Shunsuke, Ooshima Kanata, Natsume Kengo, Hasebe Yuika, Tagawa Kunihiro, Kushitani Asaka, Kusama Shinobu, and sensei.」

From my point of view, I named the ones who have greater strength than average for this world. All of them in the human academy are strong. With regards to the adventurer duo, considering their experience with real combat they might be stronger than the academy group. Maybe Kusama-kun as well. Oni-kun was startled when the names Yamada-kun and Ooshima-kun came up. Well, mentioning those names here means that it's possible that they might be targeted by the demons from now on, so that reaction should be expected. But, you don't need to worry.

「Taking action is prohibited.」

I declare that to the Demon King. If she takes action against the reincarnators, particularly sensei, then I have no intention of overlooking it even if she is the Demon King.

「That depends on them of course.」

The Demon King has no intention of backing down either, from her response. Certainly, in the Demon King's position, in a situation where the reincarnators become hostile, they would have to be dealt with no matter what, naturally. However, I have no intention of changing my position either.

I slightly open my eyes, putting power into them. Sensing my mood, the smile vanishes from the Demon King's face and she takes on a serious look. A sense of

tension permeates the room. Vampire girl and oni-kun gulp and hold their breath.

「Fine then. I won't do anything to the reincarnators personally. However, if they become hostile to the army then they'll have to be dealt with. Is that okay?」

The one who yielded, was the Demon King. I close my eyes, signalling agreement. With the tense atmosphere becoming relaxed, vampire girl and oni-kun start to breathe again.

If the Demon King takes action personally, them being reincarnators won't make the slightest difference. Even the two here, vampire girl and oni-kun, would have no chance of beating the Demon King together. Even if vampire girl used the Envy skill, or oni-kun released the wrath skill, they wouldn't match the Demon King I'm sure. With the other reincarnators falling far short of vampire girl and oni-kun, they wouldn't be able to go against her even if they attacked all at once.

「If that happens then I will deal with them.」

I hope that won't happen, but in the case where the reincarnators are hostile to the Demon King's Army, the safest option is for me to take action. They might even inadvertently fall to the Demon King's Army anyway. As if sensing my intention, oni-kun sighed in relief.

Translation notes:

Reminder of who's who:

- o Yamada Shunsuke - Shurein Zagan Anareich, aka "Shun". First introduced in S1. The 4th prince, and later on, the Hero.
- o Ooshima Kanata - Carnatia Seri Anabald, aka "Katia". First introduced in S7. The pessimistic Duke's Daughter.
- o Natsume Kengo - aka Yuugo. First introduced in S13. Loser prince with a spider installed in his brain.
- o Hasebe Yuika - aka Yuri. First introduced in S13. Saint candidate.
- o Tagawa Kunihiro - adventurer and childhood friends with Asaka. First introduced in "Elf Village Battle ②"
- o Kushitani Asaka - adventurer and childhood friends with Kunihiro. First

introduced in “Elf Village Battle ②”

- o Kusama Shinobu - Sajin. The fail ninja.

- o Sensei (Okazaki Kanami) - aka Oka-chan. Loli elf.

The 3 dead students are all male, incidentally.

“^” expression with her mouth - something like this:

Chapter 268 - That Which Is Hidden

Now then, having explained the current situation of the reincarnators the conversation is over, or perhaps not. Rather, I see that oni-kun's main question is something else.

I decided to wait until oni-kun brings up his main question. He's currently talking with the Demon King, something or other about oni-kun being entrusted with the 8th Army, a rather turbulent flow of events. Yup, I can't do anything about that, so do your best oni-kun.

While at it, the Demon King is also trying to induce vampire girl into the army with a friendly smile. Saying that she'll pass on that, vampire girl declines clearly with a friendly smile in return. Though they're both smiling I can somehow see a fierce argument between them. Too bad, but I'm planning to have vampire girl compulsorily transferred to the 10th Army as soon as she graduates, so I can't allow her to be taken somewhere else. Well, I can just wait and see whether she'll participate in the war or not for now.

「Shiro-san. There is something I want to confirm.」

While the invisible fierce argument is going on between vampire girl and the Demon King, finally oni-kun brings up his main question. It's obvious to see that he's tense with a sense of "I've made my resolution". Certainly, with such a mood I must also deal with him seriously. In an obedient manner, though saying that it probably looks normal from oni-kun's perspective, I nod.

「Shiro-san, I want you to reveal what you've been hiding.」

What an ambiguous question. However, I understand what it is that oni-kun is trying to say. Or rather, I've predicted it.

From oni-kun's behaviour to date, I can tell that he is being cautious about me. Also, with him being able to properly understand me despite me being of so few words, to the extent of him being so good at conjecture that I want to ask if he's an esper, I was sure he would also be capable of understanding the hidden meaning within my words. From there, it was clear from his behaviour

during the first conference with the Divine Word Religion that he was convinced that I was being secretive. Because oni-kun, while discussing with the Divine Word Religion, was also trying to draw information out of me.

Oni-kun has noticed. That I'm being secretive. He probably has no idea what about. If he did then he'd really be an esper, so despite everything even oni-kun doesn't know, probably. However, I'm sure he expects that it's not something good. Otherwise, he wouldn't be so openly cautious and prepared for the worst while making this enquiry. And, his expectation isn't wrong.

What to do. To talk about this, is to take a gamble. Upon learning, what choice will he make? I can't predict that. Will he approve and become a cooperator, or instead will he object and become hostile, or otherwise will he look on as a spectator?

Whatever choice he makes, I will not condemn him. However, if he chooses to obstruct me, I have no intention of showing mercy. Even though that contradicts me telling the Demon King not to make a move on the reincarnators.

While thinking about this, it seems that my eyes have opened. Instead of with fluoroscopy, I directly look at oni-kun's face with my eyes. That face is seriousness itself. Considering oni-kun's accurate conjecture, I'm sure that he understands just how critical a question he is asking. Despite knowing, he still asks. Meaning that it's not some superficial resolution. After all, it means that he's prepared to confront me in the worst case scenario.

I will disclose what I've been hiding. That might result in him earning my displeasure. It's not like oni-kun doesn't realise that. In addition, to confront me, basically means the death of oni-kun. Despite knowing that, he still asks even so.

I too, better be prepared to make my resolve I guess.

I pull everyone here into another dimension. So that Kuro cannot hear. I cannot allow Kuro to hear what is going to be discussed now. The reason why I also brought vampire girl and the Demon King, is because if I'm going to tell oni-kun, then I thought I should also tell them at the same time. Particularly in the Demon King's case, I would have to tell her soon enough anyway.

On suddenly being tossed into another dimension, oni-kun and the others were flustered and simultaneously extremely tense. I'm sorry to confuse them, but I want to get started already.

「The world is kept alive by the System. But, even so it is on the verge of death.」

While speaking, I put an opening into the other dimension, showing this planet from high above. Looking at this planet from space. At the other side.

Vampire girl and oni-kun gasp. There, the oceans are withered, and the land is covered in fissures across half the world.

Both in the human territories, and in the demon territories, only in those places are there no obstructions to abundant life. However, that's limited to only those territories. If you take one step outside from there, then the land of this planet is completely barren. If you cross over the ocean, there is no ocean. The oceans are withered, and dry land spreads out. Even that land is covered in fissures, creating enormous valleys. Those rifts break into this planet. This broken form of a planet. The territories that can sustain life, are nothing but a small part kept alive by the System. For this planet which is in a state close to death, that is the limit of what the System can forcibly keep alive.

「Using the energy gathered by the System, restoration is performed on the planet. That is the main function of the System. However, in the current situation only enough energy is being collected to keep the System operational, and performing restoration is out of reach.」

In order to attack D, the majority of that energy was expended, and as a result the restoration of the planet was stopped. Vampire girl and oni-kun are looking at this scene with their breath taken away, but in actuality a considerable amount has been recovered. Based on sneaking a peek at the System logs, at the beginning, half the planet was literally broken. Broken and one step short of collapse. Since that period, it's been recovered to the level of merely being fissures.

If a massive quantity of energy hadn't been expended, complete recovery using the proper method should have been possible. Even so, that would likely have resulted in the souls of many people being unable to tolerate the strain

and falling by the wayside. That couldn't be helped. If the same soul is forcibly reincarnated too often, it's inevitable for the soul to suffer abrasion. D also expected that to happen for sure. In the System, a facility was prepared in advance to shelter souls when they reached the limit. I activated that, and sheltered the souls of the people that oni-kun massacred. The sheltered souls will be rested for a while, and then reincarnated into this world. Although saying that, because a significant amount of time is needed to recover the damaged souls, in practice it's better to think of them as having fallen by the wayside.

In the situation now with a massive quantity of energy having already being expended, we can't anticipate complete recovery using the proper method. Saying it's impossible, would be going too far, but at a minimum it would result in at least a quarter of the current population falling by the wayside. That's the absolute minimum, and in the worst case it's not impossible that they would be completely annihilated.

On top of all that, the soul of the Goddess, who functions as the core of the System, is worn out. Even now the Goddess's soul suffers from considerable abrasion. As the Divine Word Religion determined, the Goddess does not have long to live. Currently, the Goddess is wasting away while keeping the System running after all.

If the Goddess's life is exhausted, Kuro will succeed her position. Then, if my prediction is correct, Kuro will rapidly waste away, sacrificing all of himself to decisively restore the planet. For Kuro, watching over this world is for the Goddess's sake. He won't try to live in a world without the Goddess. Then, in order to save this world that the Goddess wanted to protect, he'll die. To die in the same way as the Goddess, is probably the ultimate suicide method for Kuro. Then, with the two gods who serve as pillars sacrificing themselves, this world would be saved. With their souls dying out, they cannot even be reborn, imposing complete death upon them.

With my proposed method to destroy the System, using that energy to restore the world, the Goddess can be rescued without sacrificing her. However, with the Goddess already having exhausted herself to the extent that she cannot sustain her life, in the end she'll only be able to return to the cycle

of reincarnation. Her death cannot be averted. Still, complete extinction can be avoided.

However, that would be accompanied by sacrifices when the System is destroyed. For creatures with many skills, they would die from being unable to tolerate the shock the moment those skills are collected. In the worst case, their soul would also collapse. Because the System would be destroyed, it wouldn't be possible to shelter their souls using the System either.

In short, with my proposed method, it means that many will be sacrificed in order to save the Goddess. If you object to that, then you have no option but to sacrifice the Goddess and Kuro. At the end of the day, those are the only two options.

I explain that without concealing anything.

Translation notes:

“That which is hidden” - the title this time is rather tricky to translate well. In Japanese it's simply “ura” (裏) which in this chapter is used in two different but related senses: “the hidden meaning within my words” and “the other side [of this world]”. In a literary sense it normally refers to hidden things - to things that are the opposite of being in plain sight or obvious.

Chapter 269 - Their Respective Decisions

「There really is no way other than those two options?」

「None.」

I immediately dismiss the hope in oni-kun's question, that he asks in a trembling voice. This world already has one foot in the grave. It's already impossible to resolve this perfectly without any sacrifices. That's just how much a quagmire it's become.

「Say, since we have lots of skills, doesn't that mean we'll also die?」

Vampire girl's voice doesn't tremble. However, since her pupils are lurching, I can tell that she's in turmoil.

「I will expand the System's soul sheltering functionality, improving it so that at least the reincarnators can be saved.」

It's not yet completed though, but I'll make sure to have it ready before destroying the System. Or rather, while it's incomplete I intend to even postpone the destruction of the System, so there's no need to worry.

「If that's the case, then apply it to everyone in the world!」

「Impossible. A massive amount of surplus energy would be required for that.」

Basically, the amount of energy required would be equivalent to having another god sacrifice themselves. If we had that much spare energy, we could just pack it into the System and be done with it.

「After the System is destroyed, what will become of this world?」

「Who knows?」

I don't care about that. The task that I was assigned, was to assist the Demon King. After the System is gone I have no intention of watching over the future of this world.

「I'm asking a serious question here, okay?」

「I gave a serious reply.」

As for what will happen to this world after the System is destroyed, that is up

to the people of this world to decide, and is nothing to do with me. It's fine if the humans and demons continue their strife. It's also fine for them to work to revive the ruined hemisphere. Whatever they do is up to the residents of this world to decide. After that point, if another cataclysm occurs, there'd be no Goddess to save them next time though.

「Shiro-san, what will happen to those who die after the System is gone?」
「They'll return to the normal cycle of reincarnation.」

While the System exists, the souls of those who die in this world, are simply reborn again in this world. However, that flow is something artificial. Normally, the dead go through the cycle of reincarnation, being reborn across all worlds. If the System goes away then things will just revert to that normal flow.

「Then, what if they die before the System is destroyed, and the System is destroyed before they are reborn?」
「In that situation they will also return to the cycle of reincarnation.」

The System is merely a temporary depository for souls. If it is gone, then they will all follow the laws of nature and return to the cycle of reincarnation. Trying to destroy the System obviously won't destroy the souls it had gathered. However, for those who are alive when the System is destroyed, with the backlash from their skills being extracted, they may die and their souls may be destroyed. In short, contradictory it may be, but it's safer to be dead than alive. Well, they'll still be dead either way though.

「I see. They're better off dead, huh.」

It seems that oni-kun has also understood that. And, has made his decision.

「I understand. Shiro-san, I will cooperate with you.」

Saying so, oni-kun holds out his hand. W, woah. This is, that, right? That handshake-like thing? It'd be odd not to accept, right?

I timidly extend my hand, then, a handshake. A rather strange feeling.

And, just when I'm feeling strangely embarrassed, vampire girl tears away oni-kun's hand that is connected to mine. Then she firmly grasps my hand and shakes it up and down vigorously. What does this girl want?

I guess she was satisfied with shaking my hand for a while, as vampire girl lets go of my hand. Then for some reason she glares at oni-kun who snorted. I guess there's some weird antagonism burning between them?

While I'm dumbfounded by this, next it was the Demon King who took my hand. Rather than the normal Demon King with her silly smile, her face is pointed at the ground.

「Shiro-chan.」

While grasping my hand, she calls out to me with a voice that seems about to vanish.

「Shiro-chan.」

When she whispered again, some water fell onto my hand. That drop of water, wasn't just a single drop, and more fell onto our hands one by one.

「I'm sorry.」

What is the meaning of that apology?

「Thank you.」

What is the meaning of that gratitude?

The Demon King simply continued to sob.

All alone, the Demon King had continued to think about the Goddess.

She was neither god, nor human, nor demon.

She was weak.

Lacking the strength to save the Goddess.

She was strong.

All alone, she continued to hold to the Goddess's ideals and watch over the world.

Her former comrades had already gone.

Even so, she continued her solitary battle.

Then, realising that the time of her death was approaching, she opposed the Goddess's will for the first time.

Even though she opposed the Goddess's will, it was for the sake of saving the Goddess.

I have seen her resolve and her wish. That only began when I devoured the soul of Mother, the Demon King's subordinate, though that glimpse of her was only from the perspective of her follower. Even so, I was certainly able to see her true thoughts.

Personally, I don't want to save the Goddess. To be honest, it's better to say that I hate the Goddess herself. I find her methods to be nauseating. Whether or not I feel able to approve of her methods, I cannot like her.

However, I wanted to grant the Demon King's wish. The wish of this weak yet strong girl. Like me, she doesn't possess a cheat, and she truly was weak. Yet, she stayed alive, kept on struggling, this strong girl who kept her promise. I want her last moments to be glorious.

Demon King Ariel. Her soul has approached the limits. With the System, a part of the opponent's soul is absorbed in the form of experience points. That distorts the soul itself, evolving it into an unnatural form. The Demon King's soul, after such a long time, has amassed a lot of experience points. That is why the Demon King is so strong, but at the same time, her soul has been increasingly distorted. She couldn't become a god. Her soul could not withstand becoming a god. It is only a matter of time before the Demon King's soul collapses. That's why, in order to accomplish a grand task in her last moments, she decided to become the Demon King.

At the beginning, I was doing all this because D forced me to. However, while I traveled together with the Demon King, she let me eat delicious food, and we chatted together. I'm not sure what I should call this emotion that welled up while doing so. I, out of respect for the Demon King's purpose, want to grant her wish. Her wish to save the Goddess.

Chapter 270 - Are We Going To Be Okay With Only This Equipment?

After the second conference with the Divine Word Religion was completed, the days became so hectic that it made one feel dizzy. That's because the 10th Army that the Demon King forced onto me hadn't been managed properly. While the name has always been the 10th Army, in essence it was the private army of a regional lord, so naturally there was pretty much nothing there. Thus, it wasn't any different to a newly established army. While it's true that the capable people had already been headhunted by the other armies, the members were almost entirely new recruits anyway. A bunch of greenhorn soldiers who had only just graduated from the academy. Furthermore, since all the talented ones had been headhunted by the other armies, what was gathered was just a lackluster bunch. Furthermore, because of the other armies doing headhunting and so on, they had no real achievements either. Basically, I've been foisted with just the rejects. Having to turn this lot into a proper army, really seems like some kind of bad joke.

Therefore, I had to take these rotten soldiers, and go to work on raising them up into war-loving combat maniacs. In the reckless early days during camping at a training ground, there was an idiot who tried to sneak a visit to my bedroom, but after my sincere persuasion he had a change of heart. Nowadays he has become a proper and obedient soldier. It's just your imagination that his eyes look like that of a dead fish.

Eh? There wasn't anyone who tried to sneak into Felmina-chan's bedroom, you ask? Take a guess. That girl has a weak presence. As the deputy commander, she should be at least as busy as me, but for some reason the soldiers don't remember her face. The poor girl. Or rather, how the heck does Felmina-chan have a weaker presence than me when I'm using perception inhibition magic?

In practice, if Felmina-chan hadn't been here, this army wouldn't be functional, you know. She is making great efforts in many areas such as office

work, training soldiers and replenishing supplies though. Yet despite that, why can't the soldiers remember her face? It's one of the Seven Wonders of the 10th Army. Incidentally, another one of those Seven Wonders is the figure of me sleeping for some reason, but I mustn't mind it.

After about a year of this and that with the army and being so busy here and there, I didn't have the spare time to be involved with anything else. I've left dealing with the elves to Argnar, left dealing with the Divine Word Religion to the Demon King, and so on. Well, it's not like I need to do anything and everything by myself anyway, and both Argnar and the Demon King are capable so I'm not anxious. Not that the Demon King is actually doing much though. For exchanges with the Divine Word Religion, since the attack on the elf village hasn't actually started yet there's not much to do anyway. Before that can begin, the war with the humans has to be completed first.

While the development of my 10th Army is making good progress, there's various replacements going on in the other armies. Firstly, oni-kun has been inaugurated as a commander. Oni-kun has become the commander of the 8th Army, which is similar to the 10th Army in that it's mostly an army in name only. However, unlike mine it has proper personnel. The feudal lords who had a relationship with the elves were dealt with, and the soldiers they controlled were pulled together to form the 8th Army. Of course Argnar was involved in the elimination of the feudal lords with relationships with the elves, but so that the elves would not realise this, it was made so that oni-kun was the one who officially did it. Using that great achievement, he became a commander amongst all the fanfare. He got ahead in life faster than Mera.

Regarding Mera, he has officially become the 4th Army commander, taking over the Balto. It seems that Balto himself was cautious about Mera, but since there was nobody else with the ability to handle it, he vacated the position of army commander with an aching heart. Balto who was then free, was pushed into the command and administration of the army under direct control of the Demon King. Do your best Balto. Never give up Balto.

Then, there's Kuro who was entrusted with the 9th Army. To be blunt though, the 9th Army is Kuro's private army. Yup. With drakes and dragons. Maybe it was with his Administrator privileges, or maybe I just didn't know that they

could do it originally, but the personnel of the 9th Army are made up of drakes and dragons transformed into people. They're not even demons. No matter how you look at it they're stronger than the other armies, or rather, too strong. This is a bunch who must be used carefully. If my 10th Army fought with them, they'd be absolutely crushed. Or rather, even the weakest of them might be stronger than the top brass amongst the other armies.

The 1st to 3rd armies are armies of proper demons. The head of the 4th Army might be a vampire, but apart from him they're a normal demon army. The 4th to 7th are also normal. The abnormal ones are the 8th and above. Well, I guess with this that's the general sense of the armies. It's a bit longer until vampire girl's generation graduates from the academy, and once those graduates join the army and are properly integrated then the preparations will be complete. The number of personnel won't increase anymore beyond that.

But, when I see all the personnel together, there's one problem here. There's not enough materials. Mainly weapons and armour.

Considering the current situation of the demons, the production of food has to be the highest priority. Although the population has declined, all the able people have been conscripted, so there's insufficient people working in production activities. If most of them weren't working in food production, then all the demons would be starving. Which has resulted in weapons and armour being unavoidably deprioritized. With us preparing for war it does make me wonder what's going on.

So anyway, my army is the 10th Army. The 10th Army amongst the 10 armies. In short, the last one. We're also last for the provisions of goods. Thus, we have nothing decent!

While Argnar is able to deploy his 1st Army with fine armours and swords, we're getting nothing but secondhand goods or inferior goods. While Felminachan has been trying to arrange supply of something decent, no matter how excellent she is she's still just an inexperienced young girl. She's no match against the top brass. Even when I went to Balto personally to object, I was refused with him saying that they can't provide what doesn't exist. Since Balto is running around with heavy bags under his eyes, that likely indicates that it's impossible.

I guess it can't be helped that I'm asking for too much. Nonetheless, you can't wage war without equipment. Since being born I've never actually used weapons though, but it would be far too cruel to tell the soldiers to fight barehanded. Which is why I've come to make a request of someone who can make what I need.

「So then, make them.」

「No no no. I'm too busy as well you know?」

To refuse my request, oni-kun, you've become considerably self-important haven't you? As you might have guessed, the one I'm making a request to is oni-kun. With his unique skill, oni-kun is able to refine magic swords. Because it consumes MP it's not like he can create them limitlessly, but it's wonderful to be able to create without raw materials. I don't need him to create anything fancy, I just want him to at least create some proper swords.

It would be great if I could even just headhunt the 8th Army personnel for the 10th Army, you know. In exchange I could even give my carefully made underwear (increased defence) to the 8th Army, you know. If you don't do it I have no idea what I would do next, you know. So, as a result of persistent negotiations, oni-kun eventually accepted. With this we finally have some weapons.

I gave up on getting plate armour, so using my threads I created clothes for all the soldiers. To put it bluntly they have better defensive than full body armour anyway. Having them wear uniformly white clothes that cover the whole body, when the soldiers stand in line, they look like a gathering of some kind of dubious secret organisation. I'm not cutting corners by having them be white. It's got nothing to do with adding colouring being a pain or anything like that. It's not, okay?

Thus, the 10th Army's preparations were almost completed.

Translation notes:

“sneak a visit to my bedroom” - the word used here is more of a euphemism, but basically refers to the act of sneaking into someone's bedroom at night for sex.

Chapter 271 - The Ominous 10th Army

「Say, goshujin-sama?」

Vampire girl's lips are trembling, pointing at the 10th Army members who are standing to attention in front of us.

「What, are they?」

Even if you ask me what they are, they're still the 10th Army though.

「Are my eyes mistaken I wonder? It seems to me that everyone has status values exceeding 1000 though?」

Ah, I see. I can't use Appraisal anymore so I can't see their status values *etc.* Still, 1000 huh. How weak. I thought I had trained them pretty vigorously, but if it's like this they would even lose one-on-one against a higher ranked drake, huh.

「It's strange, right? It's because goshujin-sama's standard is strange, right?」

「It's pointless to use words like “standard” and so on with this person.」

To vampire girl's exclamation, Felmina-chan replies while having eyes like that of a dead fish.

「What the, how did your status values reach around 2500?」

「Heh, heh-heh-heh.....」

While vampire girl is in shock, Felmina-chan ignores it with nothing more than a dry laugh. As if guessing something, vampire girl stares at her with a look of pity.

Unlike vampire girl, I couldn't train Felmina-chan since she was a child, so only this much progress could be made. Even so, she had more time to develop than the average soldier here, so she should be able to fight on a par with a higher ranked drake. Naturally, she'd be no match for a dragon though. Since they're swarming with them over there, the 9th Army sure is unfair.

「Waldo, are you okay?」

「I'm fine. If it's for you sake then I shall endure any kind of special training.」

For vampire girl's reverse harem members, after her Charm was released, the only one who continued to stay with vampire girl like before was Waldo-kun. Since vampire girl was forcibly moved to the 10th Army, Waldo-kun came together with her as well. In addition, with several other graduates from vampire girl's generation added, the 10th Army has reached the full quota. There will be no further increases until the war starts. Around the time the new recruits get used to the environment of the 10th Army, the preparations for war will truly begin. Saying it the other way, it means I have until then to train the new recruits. I can't wait to get started!

So, while I was tormenting the 10th Army, a certain incident occurred at the human academy. Maybe it could be called an incident, or maybe something else. Yamada-kun acquired a Ruler skill. It would be a lie to say that I hadn't expected this, but when he actually acquired it I was surprised. Of course, I shall be making full use of this. The hacking of the System will take a big step forwards with this. Afterwards, if I can do something about Potimas and the pope, I should be able to somehow scrape together the remaining Ruler skills.

Apart from that, there's been no movement amongst the elves so far. Potimas's clones are secretly doing things within Yamada-kun's country, but I plan to use Natsume-kun to make a clean sweep of them later, so there's no problem. At that time, I shall put imouto-chan to work in a major way.

The humans have at last realised that the demons are going to make a full-blown invasion, so they're massing troops along the border. Amongst them, is a proper unit from the Divine Word Religion. It appears that the pope has chosen to fight. However, there's no sign of any of the generals I saw during the conference, so I guess they're reserving their important troops for the following war.

Which reminds me, I realise that I forgot to tell them to have the Hero participate in this war, but perhaps the Demon King skillfully talked to them about that, since he's properly participating. The Hero Julius and his comrades have gathered at a fort. So that I can be certain to deal with the Hero, I spoke with the Demon King about having the 10th Army's target destination be the fort the Hero is at. Naturally, this was easily accomplished. Since the 10th Army has always had fewer personnel than the other armies, they've been treated as

a reserve corps anyway.

While the other armies were also still preparing for the invasion, the army commanders were called to the Demon King's castle. It appears that the final conference is about to begin. Well, rather than calling it a conference, it's just about getting the final confirmations, so it's basically like a debriefing session I guess.

On entering the conference room, the other commanders were already gathered. When I entered Argnar briefly glanced at me, but showed no other reaction apart from that. Naturally the other commanders don't know about my connection with him, let alone the Demon King. Mera had a similar reaction to Argnar. Oni-kun made a short bow. Kuro didn't even glance at me.

The other commanders took their seats in silence. The boobian 2nd Army commander made suggestive glances towards the other commanders, and the idiot giant of the 3rd Army was cowering. Perhaps because the mock-samurai of the 5th army is a Demon King supremacist, he's keeping an eye out for any commanders being unfavourable towards the Demon King. To put it bluntly, whether you do that or not the Demon King won't be shaken either way so it's just a meaningless action. The shota from the 6th Army appears to be composed, but I can tell that he's nervous inside. The hoodlum of the 7th Army, is noticeably sullen.

The Demon King's Army, is overly blessed with individuality. Though not a single one of them are talking, the room is noisy.

Even though I want to go back already, I settle down in the empty seat next to Kuro. The gazes from the boobian and the shota are painful.

The ones here who don't know much about me are, the boobian, the idiot giant, the mock-samurai and the shota. In the meaning that he doesn't know my true ability, the hoodlum is similar. Amongst the army, I know that there's rumours that I'm like a tagalong of the Demon King, or that it might be a case of nepotism. Because of which there's various doubts raised about my ability. As a result, the boobian and the shota are turning their inexpressible grudge from the Demon King and onto me you see. What a pain. There's been harassment and so on towards the 10th Army, so to avoid that I had to conceal the activities

of the 10th Army.

Perhaps it's due to that, or perhaps it's a byproduct, but for whatever reason there's actually rumours going around that the 10th Army is a secret force that is conducting top secret missions for the Demon King. At first glance, we actually are extremely shady. Because our activities are even being hidden from Balto, that lent unnecessary extra credibility to the rumours. Also, because the hoodlum had the misunderstanding that I was an intelligence specialist, it seems that became a contributing factor. All we were doing was just some special training though, okay.

Hey, just when I was thinking back through the strange rumours drifting around the 10th Army, the Demon King enters. That instant, the mood in the room becomes even more tense.

「Then, I shall start the conference. Balto.」

「Yessir.」

With that exchange between the Demon King and Balto, the conference began.

Translation notes:

“Boobian” - the phrase that Shiro uses here is “oppai seijin”, which literally means “person from the planet boobies” or alternatively “big-breasted alien”.

“Tagalong” - the literal meaning would be “goldfish droppings”, like how their droppings trail behind them. Fans with long memories might recall Naga from *Slayers Special* - she is frequently referred to as Lina Inverse's “tagalong” in this sense.

If it wasn't obvious by now, the exchange at the end between Ariel and Balto is directly from “B1 - The Demon King's close aide lets out a sigh at the conference”.

Chapter 272 - Dancing The Conference

Mr Argnar of the 1st Army reports. No delays or problems.

Ms Sanatoria of the 2nd Army reports. Tehehe, I'm scheming something. The pattern of having some kind of strategy. Well, whether that strategy is a success or a failure it won't have a big influence. I guess it's fine to leave it to chance.

Mr Kogou of the 3rd Army reports. I don't wanna fight. Stop messing about, snaps Miss Demon King.

Mr Merazofis of the 4th Army reports. Balto-san, please don't worry. Mera, while you're saying something or the other, to think you're worried about the state of your former boss, huh. I'm moved to tears. Yet, it's the pattern where the former boss thinks that his former subordinate is a weird guy.

Mr Darado of the 5th Army reports. Maou-sama! I shall try my hardest! Ah, yes, yes, do what you can.

Mr Hyuui of the 6th Army reports. I'll do my best so please don't kill me, really, truly. He's seriously nervous about the Demon King. It seems that the spectacle of the Demon King chewing on the boobian's arm some time ago became a major trauma for him.

Mr Blow of the 7th Army reports. You being the Demon King is some kind of joke, hey! It seems that he's livid over the overly cruel working conditions of his brother Balto. Yup, feel free to snap. When all's said and done, while Balto is in the midst of working himself to the bone, the Demon King is just idling around after all. That being said, this isn't the place to snap though. Read the mood.

The mock-samurai of 5th army and the hoodlum start an argument, then there's a little incident where the Demon King stops them. Can I go somewhere else already please. I want to return soon and eat delicious food.

I meet oni-kun's eyes. It seems that oni-kin is also fed up with this arguing back and forth, and he shrugs his shoulders.

That oni-kun reports. No problems. That's a bit brief, hey.

After I spoke about the things I was hiding, perhaps oni-kun had various kinds of breakthroughs as he became highly active. In using the 8th Army to clean up the surroundings, that is. Various kinds of small scale armed human groups, such as bandits or adventurers, that entered the demon territories were relentlessly disposed of. When doing so, he showed no mercy at all. It was wholesale slaughter. With those excessively cruel actions, it resulted in even his own side becoming afraid of him. All the more so because he treated his soldiers like disposable pawns. It seems that even Balto saw him as a problem. From oni-kun's point of view, he probably saw it as a form of mercy towards his opponents though, but there's almost certainly nobody who understood that.

The conference continues, and Mr Kuro of the 9th Army reports. No problems. Yup, if a problem occurred within your army, it would be a global scale crisis after all. If dragons and drakes, and the god commanding them, had a problem that they couldn't deal with it would be worrying wouldn't it?

「Then, the report of the 10th Army.」

Whoops! Damn, that means it's my turn doesn't it. Calm down, me. It's alright, me. It's just a few words, me.

「The 10th Army, no problems.」

Yay! I've said it all! I've now completed everything that I need to do here! Nobody is going to raise any subject that needs me to respond now, right?

Perhaps my wish was granted, as the conference ended soon afterwards. All that's needed now is to advance, so I guess it was determined that it was fine for all the commanders to return and give their respective orders? In that regard, it's nice and smooth compared to modern day Japan with all those excessive meetings eh.

After the conference ended, Kuro left immediately. It was decided that Kuro's 9th Army would mobilise together with the Demon King's own directly attached army. Or rather, if they weren't kept in reserve, it would be bad for the humans. If the war capabilities are too lopsided, the damage to both sides won't be even. The 9th Army is basically a secret weapon!

「Shiro-san.」

Oni-kun and Mera approach me. Once the war begins we won't be able to meet so readily anymore, so I guess this is a final greeting. I doubt that oni-kun would die though, and actually even Mera is strong enough to be able to battle a lower ranked dragon by himself so he probably wouldn't die either, so this isn't likely to be our final greeting in life.

「Hey, you got business with her?」

The hoodlum blocks the way of oni-kun and Mera. Why?

「She's about to have a discussion with me now regarding the march. If you don't have any business with her then don't take up her time.」

Say what? Isn't that news to me? Ah, is that why he said "about to" huh. Rather, what's there to actually talk about? The general outline should have been prepared already by Felmina-chan though.

「Surely just a greeting is fine?」

「Then, you're already done, right?」

Hoodlum rudely reacts to oni-kun. Why is this guy like this, always stirring up trouble around me. I wish he'd give it a rest.

「There's not even time for a brief chat huh? My goodness. The 7th Army has surprisingly little leeway in its actions then.」

With those contemptuous seeming words, oni-kun laughs scornfully. The hoodlum grits his teeth to hold in his temper, while Mera restrains oni-kun who seems about to provoke things further.

「Shiro-san, there's a nuisance here so I guess that's enough for today.」

「Please take care of ojou-sama.」

While leaving, oni-kun moved to whisper into the hoodlum's ear, saying "by disregarding the person's feelings like that, do you think she would ever actually notice you?" That was quite acrimonious for oni-kun.

「Let's go!」

The hoodlum angrily stomps off without even getting my acknowledgement. I don't know why he doesn't realise that such selfish actions are why he's unpopular. My appreciation for him is only dropping further you know.

The discussion afterwards regarding this and that about the march, was a surprisingly proper consultation. When it comes to work it seems that he's able to be properly focused about it. Well, he's the younger brother of that Balto, so I guess this much is to be expected.

As a result of the discussion, the 7th Army will be at the forefront and the 10th Army will be responsible for making raids. The hoodlum seems to have decided that the 10th Army doesn't have proper soldiers, and has mistaken them for special forces who work behind the scenes or something. Well, it's fine though. Until the Hero appears, I guess I'll just take the opportunity to relax at the rear then.

Translation notes:

For the main conference, in Shiro's mind it's a bit like a formal Japanese business meeting based on the language used.

"do you think she would ever actually notice you" - in a romantic way, by implication.

The Human-Demon Great War - The Situation Of Tagawa Kunihiko

Author's note: The point of view of reincarnator Tagawa Kunihiko. If you're wondering who this guy is, you might recall him appearing in the elf village timeframe, hopefully.

I had thought that I was in luck. To be reborn in another world, like that from a light novel. Not only that, but beside me is the girl who was also my childhood friend in the previous world. I even have a cheat-like ability. Hey, isn't this an easy win in life - is what I had thought.

It's not like I hated the previous world. However, I definitely had the feeling that something was lacking. I wanted more excitement. I wanted to go on an adventure like in a movie or light novel. When that wish came true in practice, what I felt was more of a sense of expectation rather than a sense of loss. I'm aware that I'm not normal anyway, and compared to Asaka who was in the same situation as me, I couldn't be normal like her and weep for some time. I was fortunate to be unable to think of the environment I was born into as being suspect.

Asaka and I were born in the same mercenary group, at the same time. Mysteriously enough, the instant I saw Asaka, even though her appearance was completely different, I could tell that she was Asaka. It seems that was the same for Asaka too, so I thought that it must be fate.

Asaka and I in the previous world, were just childhood friends. It's not like we were dating or anything, it just that we hung out together whether we liked it or not. However, somehow or other, I vaguely figured that in future we'd probably get together. While it seems that Asaka also felt that way, it felt like it would take a bit more time until we would become intimate. Then, because we went through the unbelievable experience of actually being reincarnated in another world, the sense of distance between us instantly changed. I think that after we were reincarnated in another world our relationship changed to one

where we both depended upon each other.

Asaka was afraid that she would probably lose sight of herself if I wasn't there. And if I hadn't had Asaka, then after being thrown into a strange and different world all alone, I doubt I would have been able to say optimistic things like "adventure time!" and stuff.

As for the mercenary group we were born into, they set up a village close to the border with the demons, and made a living by repulsing demons who invaded, or conversely to invade the demon territory to attack demons. To put it in a positive way, they were a defense force that protected the humans from demon invasions. To put in a negative way, they were a bandit group that repeatedly pillaged the demons. That's the type of bunch they were.

Asaka was disgusted by such a village, and was fully determined to leave the village once she grew up. I was also in favour of leaving the village, as I had the desire to become an adventurer and travel the world. In order to build up my strength a little, I was taught how to fight from the other mercenaries starting with my father.

However, it turned out that Asaka and I would leave the village far earlier than we had assumed. Because the village was no longer there.

I will surely never forget what happened then. The troop of demons who attacked us. The familiar mercenaries who opposed them. Both my father and Asaka's father were amongst them. Those lives were taken, all too easily, all too quickly, as if they were mere bugs being crushed.

「Merazofis! Are there no survivors remaining?」

「Yeah. Let's go back.」

Despite that, when I had challenged him and got beaten in return, he overlooked me who had been reduced to a tattered heap on the ground. He even went so far as to conceal us from his fellow demons. Asaka and I, survived due to his pity.

「At last.」

Countless demons. With both humans and demons fighting while jumbled together on this battlefield, I am participating as adventurer. I wonder just how

much time has passed since the battle began - while fighting constantly, even my sense of time is missed up. After killing 10s, 100s of demons, and breaking through, I finally caught sight of that figure. That figure that I couldn't forget even if I wanted to.

「I never expected you'd be a big shot demon commander.」

There was only one demon from back then that I had any awareness of. However, I could clearly remember his name and face. It then appeared in the intelligence that the scouts brought back while risking their lives, the name of that demon commander. I was delighted when that name matched the one in my memory.

「I shall claim my vengeance!」

And so, I challenged Merazofis, that demon commander.

After I lost the village I was born and raised in to a demon raid, Asaka and I made a living as adventurers, travelling to many different places. At first there were many things that went badly. Since Asaka and I are reincarnators, we might be more mature than the average kid, but that was only on the inside. With us looking like children, we were always treated as children. The adults took the profitable jobs, and due to the rules we could only get minor work such as gathering medicinal herbs or capturing small animals. If Asaka hadn't been able to improve our evaluation so reliably and steadily, I might have given up in a sulk. Asaka dragged me into stability orientated jobs that I had no enthusiasm for, without thought to gaining ranks. When I think of those days, I was no match for her.

Eventually we were able to conduct monster subjugations, and from there things sped up. By defeating monsters experience points can be gained. By gaining enough experience points your level rises, and you can then fight with stronger monsters. Once that happens, you can take on a wider range of requests. Our fame quickly spread, and we were able to obtain the abilities of first-class adventurers at such a young age. To be frank, Asaka and I are already outstandingly strong amongst the humans. Even compared to our S rank seniors, Asaka and I are surely stronger. That's why, we participated in this war with the demons. In order to avenge our village. Since even against demons, I

was certain that we couldn't lose.

And yet, is this some kind of joke?

「Huff! Huff! Hah!」

I can't even manage my breathing. If I foolishly tried to take a rest, this guy wouldn't miss that opportunity.

I guard against the approaching sword with my blade. As for the magic that flew at me at the same time, Asaka shot it down for me. That was dangerous. If not for Asaka's support just now I would have taken that completely. I want to give Asaka my thanks, but I have no time to spare. All I can manage to do is to prepare for the next strike.

This demon called Merazofis, is outrageously strong. In swords, in magic, in precision. Instead of having some simple strong point, everything is at a high level. By sticking to the basics, he's as good as flawless. Asaka and I together, are purely defending.

How pathetic. Why the heck was I saying that we couldn't lose even against demons. I want to go back to before the battle and punch the me who dared to think that we might be fortunate enough to get revenge in person. Against a monster like this, nobody else would even stand a chance.

That's right. The only ones who can handle him, are Asaka and I alone. Precisely because Asaka and I have been able to hold back this guy, the humans are winning this battle. However, if he wasn't held up, this guy alone could turn the tide of battle. Like how Asaka and I together were routing the demons and raided the demon headquarters, this guy alone could trample down the humans. Thinking that, gives me another reason not to lose.

I can't hear any sounds from the battlefield despite how noisy it should be. Due to concentrating to the limit, it seems that I've shut out all sounds from the surroundings. Even with the surroundings seeming to be in slow motion, Merazofis's movements are still fast. Despite having my thoughts accelerated, I still can't keep up with Merazofis's movements. I can just barely follow him with my eyes. Saying it another way, because I can follow with my eyes, I can still fight. If I couldn't follow him with my eyes either, then it would be completely hopeless. However, that will be the situation before long.

The accumulated fatigue is dulling my movements. Glancing at Asaka, I can tell that she's about as exhausted as me. The dropoff in my movements, is slight. However, even that slight amount, could be fatal against this guy. I'm bleakly fighting while wondering when my head will be sent flying off after all.

I desperately strike with my blade. Asaka's magic is easily repelled, and a follow-up strike heads towards me. At the same time, the ground shakes, and my exhausted legs buckle and I fall. Fortunately, the tip of his blade passes before my eyes as I fall onto my backside. If I had still been standing, I would surely have been cut. However, that's as far as my luck goes. Right now, I'm defenselessly sitting on my backside after all.

As I get up in a panic, there's no pursuit. When I look, Merazofis is standing still. Ignoring us, he is gazing over the battlefield. There, I notice for the first time that the demon forces are in tatters.

「I guess this is an opportunity.」

He idly mutters that.

「Retreat!」

Followed by, a shout.

We have no scope to chase after that adept retreat. Since rather than us overlooking him, it was him who was overlooking us. Again, Asaka and I, were overlooked.

Translation notes:

Back in 234 - The demon of Envy and the demon of Wrath, Shiro mentions that she sent Mera to save the adventurer duo from an elite demon group.

The Human-Demon Great War - The Situation Of Kushitani Asaka And Aurel

Author's note: The first half is from the point of view of reincarnator Kushitani Asaka. The second half is from the point of view of Ronant's Apprentice No.2, in her first named appearance. Regarding Ronant's Apprentice No.2, you might recall her by reading around "Empire knights vs Ogre", hopefully.

【Kushitani Asaka】

Kunihiko insists on claiming vengeance for the village. For the stupidly impulsive Kunihiko, every time he encounters a failure, he thinks that he should overcome it, it seems. To put it in a positive way, he's hot-blooded. To put in a negative way, he's an idiot. However, I was saved by just such an idiot.

To think I would experience reincarnation. I have no real idea why such a thing happened. According to Kunihiko, reincarnating in another world is commonplace in light novels, but experiencing such a thing for real feels like it would be a nightmare or something. However, when I became a baby in a strange world before I realised it, I had to abandon such thoughts. I can't express in words just how confused I was back then. Incidentally, the fact that the nearby Kunihiko entirely witnessed the scene of me bawling my eyes out, is a painful memory that could easily kill me. Even still, the fact that Kunihiko was there besides me experiencing the same circumstances, provided emotional support.

The village Kunihiko and I were born in, was that of a bunch of robbers who were mercenaries in name only. Like the Mongolian nomads, they lived in tents, travelling around the border with the demons, who they hunted. Then, they would attack the demons they found and escape with their belongings, also reporting about them to the government to receive a reward. Legal robbers, basically.

I wanted to leave such a village as soon as possible. After that, I wanted to live normally. Kunihiko wanted to go on adventures, but for me normal is best. I

wanted to go to some safe country, and settle down there.

All that changed, with the raid by the demons. At that time, I was saved by Kunihiko. Speaking only of the result, we were simply overlooked by the demon called Merazofis, but I will never forget the gallant figure of Kunihiko as he protected me and challenged that demon. It was probably at that time, that I made up my mind. To always be together with this guy.

That's why, even though we became homeless children afterwards and had to wander around various places, even when we became successful adventurers, even though we had to do risky stuff like fighting with monsters, I stayed with Kunihiko. Even coming to this battlefield.

「Again, we were overlooked huh.」

「It seems so.」

It took everything I had to not sink to the ground. That's just how constantly bloodcurdling that fight until just now was.

The demon commander Merazofis. The male demon who destroyed our village. He was, far stronger than we could possibly have imagined.

Kunihiko and I, are extremely strong for humans. Kunihiko might say that because we were reincarnators we had our growth rate adjusted as a cheat ability, but that could be unexpectedly correct. That's just how strong Kunihiko and I are.

However, Merazofis was even further above us. Kunihiko and I, even with the two of us taking him on together we were unable to do anything at all. No, I should say the three of us, huh.

I stare at the distant fort. If I could have activated Clairvoyance, I would have seen the form of a woman standing there who was in the same state of total exhaustion. I didn't even know her name, but she had continuously provided us with covering fire from that fort. I think her magic skills are incredible. From such a distant place, she carried out precision sniping on the rapidly moving Merazofis after all. I could never manage that.

At the end, the reason Merazofis decided to retreat, was because she used great magic to strike a major blow against the demons. The tremor from which

caused Kunihiko to fall on his backside, making me panic though. Rather than defeat Merazofis, I think her strategy to tilt the state of the battle in the humans' favour and make them retreat was successful.

Then, in the opening when Merazofis was distracted for a moment on seeing the battlefield, she shot him through the heart. Immediately after activating great magic on a big enough scale to completely change the progress of the battle, she still had enough power to shoot through that Merazofis's magic defence. There's still much that I don't know about this world, but there's some amazing people out there. That includes Merazofis, who despite being shot through the heart, carried out the retreat without even a change of expression on his face.

I doubt that could kill him. Despite being shot through the heart, for him to look as if nothing had happened, makes me wonder if he's really a normal living being. He was a genuine monster. If that unknown magician hadn't aided us, I doubt whether Kunihiko or I could have survived. Realising that, I belatedly feel a sense of terror rising. While breathing out a sigh, I left the battlefield.

【Aurel】

Dat was seriously dangerous. Da heck was dat monster? I never heard there was a demon like dat though. Or rather, I'm seriously grateful to those two youngsters for being able to pin it down. If those two hadn't been able to pin it down, who knows what would've happened.

「Vice Captain Aurel, it's troubling if you disregard my instructions and act on your own.」

Argh, da noisy one is here.

「Sowwy.」

「What's with that tone? I'm always telling you, right? That as the Vice Captain of my glorious squad, you can't just expose yourself as a bumpkin with that stupid tone.」

Da captain's scolding goes in one ear and out da other. Argh, what a pain. Why do I havta get these lectures from my superior on such a battlefield I wonder. I bet dat dis guy just don't get how seriously bad dat monster was. He just doesn't get it dat if not for me and those two adventurers pinning it down,

we'd have been da losers here. Instead he was grumbling da whole time about preparing the great magic already while next to me. In da end I let loose with great magic as he wanted, didn't I? Dat should be more dan enough. I'm totally worn out from da great magic on top of da long distance sniping you know? I've done far more work dan you just with following orders.

Argh, I want to go back to teacher. If it was teacher den he'd be far more understanding. He'd be asking for far more unreasonable things instead though.

In da first place, why do I gotta be standing on da battlefield anyway? I'm da second daughter of a poor noble, so I thought I would be trying to catch a suitable fiance, then live in peace. Catching teacher's eye was the end of my luck. I was called out by da royal magician before I could recover from total shock. You never know what life can bring.

「Are you listening!?!」

「Yeah yeah.」

I'm not listening. Sigh. What's teacher been doing anyway? Blowing the heads off da top brass of the demons.

Translation notes:

“Aurel” - phonetically it is written “Ooreru”. She has quite a strong accent, though it's not really a regional accent as such. She uses the same speaking style in her previous appearances though it might not be obvious from the translations.

“Empire knights vs Ogre” - this chapter is near the end of the TurbO's translations. I'd suggest checking out the chapter after it as well.

The Human-Demon Great War - The Situation Of Merazofis

The man known as Merazofis is an ordinary person. Though his subordinates amongst the demons would surely laugh in disbelief if they heard that. Who could possibly call a man with enough strength to single-handedly overturn the course of battle “ordinary” of all things? Even still, he was undoubtedly an ordinary person. He was merely an ordinary person who had experienced an extraordinary life.

He has no special talent. No matter what he did he was average. Saying it the other way around, he could do everything to an average level. To put it in a positive way, he could do anything. To put it in a negative way, a jack of all trades and master of none. With that versatility that allowed him to be average at everything, he acquired various skills.

The sequence of events that led him to being like that, relates to his childhood. He came from a family that had served a certain noble house for generations. Naturally, it was decided that he would also serve that noble house. There, he had a fateful encounter.

It was with the young lady of that noble house. For her and Merazofis, they did not start out their relationship as master and servant, but growing up as childhood friends. During that stage, he held faint feelings of love towards the young lady. However, that was an impossible love. Since she was a child she had a fiancée, and on top of that she and her fiancée were in love with each other. There was no room for him between them. He didn't even think of coming between them. For him, so long as the person he loved was happy then he was content.

So that he could aid her, Merazofis continued to improve himself. Whenever he had time he would indiscriminately improve his skills in anything that seemed useful, making an effort to study. That work was recognised, and he was even trusted by her fiancée. Thus, when she married into her fiancée's house, he went with her.

Her fiancé was aware of Merazofis's feelings. Precisely because he knew, he trusted Merazofis. Because he was confident that Merazofis would never make her sad. Between the two men who loved the same woman, perhaps there was some kind of understanding.

Precisely because of that, he was entrusted with their beloved daughter. It was already too late. Between the woman he loved, and her husband, there was nowhere to escape. Physically and mentally, he was trapped. That daughter, was entrusted to the highly dependable Merazofis.

Merazofis, accepted those feelings. Even if he couldn't protect his beloved woman, even while enduring his own powerlessness, he would still protect that woman's daughter, he steadfastly vowed.

Even that vow, was soon crushed.

He wasn't able to do anything. Without being able to do anything, the end result was that he gained power from the one he should have been protecting. Even after throwing away his humanity, he was still overwhelmed by his powerlessness.

After the occasion when he was hopelessly beaten down by the bandits, he never failed to practice swinging a sword every morning. That would never make him dramatically stronger. Even still, wanting to reform his powerless self even a little bit, so that the next time he would be able to protect them, he put all his soul into continuing to swing.

Even all that effort, never bore fruit in the end. No matter how he struggled, Merazofis was an ordinary person. He wasn't at all suited for fighting right from the very start, so waving a sword around when he had no talent, wouldn't be enough for him to protect anything.

And yet, he didn't die. Once again, he was saved by a certain spider. Or perhaps in a way, he had already died at that time. He had lost his precious and beloved sweetheart.

Afterwards, his life was spent protecting the child of the woman he loved. To watch over her development, to be beside her.

However, Merazofis's ojou-sama, was no ordinary person. A reincarnator, and

not even human - a vampire progenitor. Merazofis himself, became a vampire as well due to that ojou-sama.

Compared to the normal humans of this world, reincarnators have more ways in which to increase their status values and skills. In addition, the ojou-sama was forced to go on a rigorous journey when she was an infant, forcing her status values to grow. The time when status values grow the fastest, is during infancy. The growth rate of those values falls together with overall growth rates as one reaches adulthood. During her infancy the ojou-sama was put through a harsh environment that would normally be unthinkable, that could even be called abuse, resulting in her status values growing at a rate that vastly exceeded those even of her fellow reincarnators.

Merazofis's status values, who was put through the same environment, also grew at a slower rate than the ojou-sama's. The cause was due to him being a person of this world, and one who had already reached adulthood. Due to him being reborn as a vampire, his status values grew faster than when he was a human, but from the perspective of the irregular ojou-sama, even that was more like a minor blip in the measurements. Eventually, Merazofis became weaker than even the ojou-sama he was supposed to protect.

Even so, what Merazofis needed to do did not change. When they were separated by the Demon King so that they wouldn't become too dependent upon each other, his thoughts were focused on the ojou-sama. To protect the ojou-sama, nothing more.

Therefore, he needed to be strong. The ojou-sama already possessed a strength that he could never reach. While that might be true, that in no way implied that it was unnecessary for him to become strong. At the very least, he needed to be strong enough so that he wouldn't hold the ojou-sama back.

And thus Merazofis never failed to train himself every day. That training was so harsh in practice, that it would make an average person doubt their own eyes. Enough that for an average person, either they would quickly damage their own health or harm their own mind. What allowed him to do that, was the experiences from the harsh journey along the way to the demon territories. The aberrant training conducted by an aberrant spider. Using the skills that he had gained while training during that journey to the full, Merazofis continued to put

himself through hellish personal training. Without himself realising it, he had strayed from common sense.

By using the Abnormal Condition Nullity skill, he no longer needed to sleep. By using the automatic recovery of HP and MP he didn't spare himself from even damaging his body. When he damaged it he took joy from being able to raise his Treatment Magic skill level. Even in the midst of work he would devote himself to strengthening skills that would make no sense to others, like Magic Manipulation and Fighting Spirit.

Eventually, Merazofis's average status values had risen as far as 5000. Such values were more than enough to be on par with a low ranked dragon, a level of strength that would be more than sufficient for this world. But even that did not satisfy him. Because the ojou-sama had about triple that.

「Report to Balto-sama.」

「Yessir!」

Merazofis sent a subordinate to report on the defeat. Even for Merazofis as an individual, considering the overall battlefield, this battle was a defeat.

The circumstances were bad. Having to fight two reincarnators, with support from a human mage of the highest class. On top of facing the three of them, it was a clear day with bright sunshine.

There was no way he could kill the reincarnators. While being weakened by the sunlight, he had to fight his opponents without killing them. That was quite a difficult order to make of an ordinary person with no talent for battle. Therefore, despite having an advantage in status values over his opponents, the fight dragged out, and he couldn't even assist with the worsening condition of the battlefield.

It is certainly true that both reincarnators were strong. Merazofis also retained the Appraisal skill. That was the spider's policy, and because of its usefulness he also kept it up for many months and years, slowly raising the level. The status values of the reincarnators as seen with Appraisal, were in the top ranked drake class. Considering their skills, it was even conceivable that they could reach bottom ranked dragons. The boy was physically orientated and had average status values of about 2500. The girl was more magically

orientated, but like the boy had average status values of about 2500. Status values don't simply add up together, but those two combined had values about equal to Merazofis.

In addition, there was supporting magic being fired. Appraisal couldn't be used because of the distance, but Merazofis estimated that the magic offensive ability was probably at least 2000.

For humans, the line that determines whether they're top class or not is having a status of 1000. Having to face three opponents with well over that, it can be understood why Merazofis was having a hard fight. Actually, before Merazofis became their opponent, the two reincarnators were routing the demon troops, and the mage was using great magic to cause massive damage. Without being able to rally the troops from the damage those three had caused, losing the battle could be considered good enough.

「Commander, you are injured.」

「It's just a scratch.」

Merazofis's chest had been pierced. Due to carelessness at the very end, he was sniped. But, as he himself said, after penetrating the armour, the damage to the body itself was nothing more than a scratch. Merazofis's magical defence ability was roughly 5000. Even when suffering a direct hit from that magic, it only pierced the skin, and didn't even reach his heart. Then again, even if it had reached his heart, that probably wouldn't have been enough to defeat Merazofis.

「I still have a long way to go.」

As for his muttering, his subordinates ignored it with a faraway look.

The man known as Merazofis is an ordinary person. He did not have a single outstanding talent. However, if there is one talent he could be said to possess, that was the talent to endure. The talent of hard work was not enough. Having surpassed the likes of hard work by reaching hell, that's what he has now. Who on earth would keep on deliberately tormenting himself until on the brink of death every day? To say that someone who would do that as having the talent of hard work seems somewhat insufficient.

As an example of that, there is a certain skill he has recently obtained. The

skill called “Patience”.

The man known as Merazofis is an ordinary person. However, it is not always the case than an ordinary person stays ordinary, as seen in his story.

Reference data from the time of the elf village war:

Shun: average status values of 3000

Katia: average status values of 1800

Sensei: status values of 1500 in magic types, 500 in physical types.

Kunihiko and Asaka would be stronger than Shun if he didn’t have the Hero title. Because sensei put her effort into searching for the students rather than combat, she was in fact surpassed by Shun and Katia.

Translation notes:

“Ojou-sama” - I thought it would be a bit confusing otherwise, so when the chapter is using “ojou-sama” to refer to Sophia’s mother I translated it as “young lady” and when it’s referring to Sophia herself I left it as “ojou-sama”.

On a side note, I decided to change “Orel” to “Aurel” in the previous chapter, based on reader feedback.

Before The Human-Demon Great War - The Situation Of Ronant

Author's note: Ronant's point of view, shortly before the war.

「Long time no see.」

「It has indeed been a long time, teacher.」

I meet with Apprentice No.1, the Hero Julius, for the first time in a while. It's been many years since I've seen him in person. Because of interference from the Divine Word Religion, I can't even meet with him properly. Really, it's so frustrating.

「I'm glad to see you're doing well.」

「Likewise, teacher. You are already an elder, yet here you are still on active service and full of spirit.」

「Who do you think I am? I'll be blasting away on active service until I die.」

「Sounds like you, teacher.」

Apprentice No.1 gives a refined smile. When I was taking care of him, there was still some innocence left in him, but he's already become a fully-fledged adult now.

「Julius... oh, Ronant-sama, when did you arrive here?」

The one who entered without even knocking, was called Hyrinth or something I think? He's one of Apprentice No.1 friends-cum-comrades.

「Just now.」

「He suddenly teleported in. I've told him so many times not to shock me so much by doing that though.」

「You still have a long way to go if you can't even perceive the teleportation omen.」

I ignore Apprentice No.1's complaint. If I don't meet in secret like this, then the Divine Word Religion gets annoying.

「You are the same as ever.」

The Hyrinth brat sighs, but I at least adhere to the minimum standards of decency.

「So? Teacher and Hyrinth both, what is your reason for coming to visit me?」
「Hrm. The Hyrinth brat has an urgent matter so he can go first.」

My matter is nothing important. Just some meddling. So I can just put it off.

「Brat huh. Well, I guess I might be a brat from Ronant-sama's perspective.」
「What's wrong with calling a brat a brat? If you want to object then you can start by trying to defeat me.」
「Please forgive me.」

After a bitter laugh, the brat suddenly puts on a serious expression.

「Ronant-sama. What I'm about to discuss is a military secret.」
「Sure, I got it. I promise not to disclose anything about what's happening here.」

The brat would have preferred it if I stepped outside I'm sure, but he's already given up on getting me to leave. We don't know each other that well, but he understands at least that much about me. Sure enough, he begins the report with a resigned expression.

「Scouting units failed to return on schedule. It's probably better to consider them to be wiped out.」

With the brat's report, Apprentice No.1's expression turns mournful. The units deployed here on what should be called the front lines of the humans, are different to the units you'd find elsewhere. The elite amongst the elite. Even such a scouting unit, failed to return without reporting anything. That signifies just how dangerous the opponents are.

「Hmm. How many of the units failed to return?」
「All of them.」

Oh my goodness. That's much worse than expected.

Before a major battle like this one, a scout unit will split into several teams when attempting to gather intelligence. Even if one team is discovered and annihilated, other teams should still be able to bring back intelligence. However, this time all the teams failed to return. What that likely means, is that

the searching ability of the opponents exceeded the stealth ability of the scouts, and on top of that they were strong enough to speedily wipe out the scouts. In addition, it also means that there were enough enemies to launch a simultaneous attack on the dispersed scout units.

It is natural for scout units to keep in contact with their companions. If any unit encounters something abnormal, they should be trained to all retreat promptly. The fact that they weren't able to do that, likely means that they were attacked simultaneously.

The ability to find and locate the scout units. The ability to annihilate the scout units in combat. For the enemy forces to be able to do that, it means that they must have at least as many members as the scout unit.

「It seems that it will be a harsh battle.」

Apprentice No.1 says that in a subdued voice. He's probably thinking about the members of the scout unit who became sacrifices, or some such.

「Apprentice No.1」

I better scold this foolish apprentice, so I address him in a low voice.

「This is you we're talking about, so I bet you're thinking about the victims from the scout unit or something, but if you have time to think about such things then you should think about yourself instead.」

「Teacher! What do you mean by "such things"!？」

Apprentice No.1 rarely raises his voice, but he's always been sensitive about matters of life and death.

「I'm saying that this isn't the time to be thinking about the victims from the scout unit.」

「Teacher. There's things that even you can say and cannot say. If you say any more, then I will not forgive you.」

「Oh-ho? How will you not forgive me?」

Against my pressure, the brat flinches. Apprentice No.1 doesn't show any agitation on the surface, but that's merely a presence.

「Just, how, are, you, going, to, not, forgive, me? Do you seriously think that

you can defeat me or what?」

Stressing each word one by one, I question him in a low voice. Apprentice No.1 or the brat, one of them gulps.

「Don't be conceited. There is always someone better than you. It doesn't matter whether or not you're the Hero.」

I release the pressure, and poke Apprentice No.1 on the forehead with my staff.

「That also goes for the scout unit. They performed their own duties, and due to a lack of strength they were killed in action. It is not wrong to mourn their deaths. However, you're barking up the wrong tree if you feel responsible for their deaths. Just because you're the Hero, if you think that means that you can save anything and everyone then you're greatly mistaken, okay? Or perhaps, you think it would have been better if you yourself went out to scout - you're not having such misplaced thinking, right? That would be clearly stealing the duty of the ones who died, and in addition, to imply that they were too incompetent to do their own jobs would be the greatest insult. It couldn't possibly be that the Hero of all people has such degrading and despicable thinking.」

It seems that Apprentice No.1 couldn't think of anything to say in response to what I pointed out. He hung his head without speaking. He's always been like this. He tries to shoulder everything. That every time someone dies in war it becomes his responsibility. Nobody else but his. That's how he's gotten into this misunderstanding that he can't be satisfied unless he can save everyone. Such a thing, would be impossible even for a god though.

「Julius.」

Instead of calling him Apprentice No.1, I call him by his name. Julius slowly raises his head.

「Remember to think about yourself on the battlefield.」

When people become preoccupied with other things, they then may not survive even when they could have.

「There is always someone better than you. You should well understand that

yourself, right? Only the strong can protect others. You are weak. So weak you can't even defeat me.」

「Teacher, you can only say that because you're strong.」

To Julius's timid objection, I bark out a laugh.

「There are ones better than me too. You should well understand that yourself, right?」

Since Julius likewise knows about "that person", he should understand. An existence with such strength that us humans couldn't possibly oppose it.

「You got it? If it becomes dangerous then run away without hesitation. You are more or less the Hero after all. Compared to having the Hero escape, it would be far worse for the Hero to die. Get that into your skull.」

「It'll be fine. I shall protect Julius after all.」

The brat is spouting some drivel.

「Having that come from someone more feeble than Apprentice No.1 isn't persuasive at all.」

「Ouch, that's harsh!」

I'm sure he took a playful attitude here in order to improve the mood. To raise his spirits so that Apprentice No.1 won't head towards the battlefield depressed. His fighting strength is a bit unreliable, but he's a good friend.

「Heheh. Well, I guess I'll have you protect him then.」

「You bet. Please be at ease.」

As the brat intended, it seems that Apprentice No.1 cheered up a bit.

「Even so, Ronant-sama, worrying over your apprentice and scolding him - you've got a cute side to you.」

「I, I'm not particularly thinking such a thing!」

What the heck is this guy saying!? I thought he was a good friend of Apprentice No.1, but it looks like I was mistaken!

「Look! He's blushing, he's blushing.」

「I'm not blushing! Dammit! I'm going back now!」

「Teacher, thank you for everything today.」

「Humph.」

I activated teleport, and left the place.

That was, the final farewell between Julius and I.

Reference data :

Ronant at the time of “P, please wait!” : status values of 1500 in magic types, 300 in physical types.

Ronant at the time of the elf village war: status values of 4000 in magic types, 400 in physical types.

Despite having passed not only his growth period but having already started the descent into old age, he still managed to more than double his magic type status values like a FREAK.

Julius: average status values of 2600

Just a bit stronger than Kunihiko and Asaka.

Translation notes:

“Scouting units failed to return on schedule” - this might sound a bit off but in the original there is no indication of whether it was just one or whether it was multiple, as there is less distinction between singular and plural in Japanese. Hence Ronant’s request for clarification.

Ronant’s “that person” is of course referring to Shiro.

Ronant at the time of “P, please wait!” - this is referring to the chapter “The Nightmare of the Labyrinth ③” when Shiro used her Ruler Authority to block his Appraisal.

The Human-Demon Great War - The Situation Of Wrath

A battlefield where both the demons and humans have become all jumbled together. No battle formations at all, just a melee. Strategy is completely meaningless and both sides cannot do anything except to kill the enemies right in front of them.

I cannot do stuff like leading on the battlefield. After all, both in the previous world and this world, I've never experienced leading others in a war. Since I was entrusted with the 8th Army, I have gained a little bit of experience, but the staff officers etc have always been far more capable than me at giving out appropriate instructions.

To be blunt, I'm not suited for command. With my abilities it's better to fight on the front line. However, considering the objective of the current war, I can't exactly go on a rampage by myself. If I went on a rampage then the humans would certainly suffer significant losses, but conversely that means that the demons would suffer fewer losses. Since both the humans and the demons must suffer similar losses, that would be the wrong move. For that reason, I couldn't just go and rampage on the front line.

However, while that may be true, I can't then just give commands from the rear. I'm incapable for a start. If it becomes well known amongst the soldiers of the 8th Army that I'm incapable, then I'll be treated with contempt. The personnel of the 8th Army are basically a mish-mash of various groups. The demon feudal lords who committed crimes had their private armies dismantled, then those were reorganised as the 8th Army. After all that happened, the morale of the soldiers in the 8th Army is low. Enough that there are even some who might rebel. To stop that, I can do nothing except to suppress them with sheer strength.

Because of that, if I'm treated with contempt even slightly then I'm finished. The moment that happens, there'll likely be a flood of deserters. There might

even be some among them who would take the opportunity to attack me. I would like to believe that such a thing won't happen after I made a display of my strength, but should it actually happen, then I will likely be forced to turn my weapons on my own soldiers. If that's the case then the losses to the demons would increase, but even I don't want to do such a thing.

As a result, the actions I should take are clear and simple. If I can't command, then I just don't have to. I just need to turn it into such a quagmire of a melee battle that there's no point in even giving commands. As a bonus extra, if I can make desertion impossible then it's perfect.

I prepared booby traps behind the rear lines of the 8th Army, and then informed them. That there's no path of retreat. That if they still try to flee, then I'll personally kill them. They shuddered to such an extent that it was fascinating.

Then, with regards to myself, I destroyed the fort. Showing myself as little as possible, I hurled magic swords at it from a distance. That way, the humans would need to leave the fort in order to escape the destruction, having no other option but to advance. The strikes from my magic swords destroyed the protection of the fort with trivial ease. It was pointless to hole up in the fort. If they die there then it would just increase their losses. Then, to urge them forwards I continued to hurl magic swords.

The demon army that couldn't retreat, and the human army that could only advance. They had no option but to clash with each other. If both sides are forced to crash into each other, then strategy becomes meaningless. Finally, once they're stuck in a melee, giving commands is worthless.

During the melee, while I threw magic swords at the rear of the human army to drive them on, I slew the minimum number of the forces who came at me. Even while hurling the magic swords, I intentionally kept their losses as small as possible. If I reduced the human army by too much, then the losses to the demon army would become too small. A proper commander would minimise any losses to his allies, one way or another. What I'm doing is the exact opposite of that.

I'm a cruel commander. My subordinates have no luck. I seriously sympathise

with them. However, that's all I can do. I chose to do no more than that.

Thus, while I'm throwing magic swords around and defeating the humans who came at me, I heard a battlecry that somehow managed to be audible across the noisy battlefield.

「UWOOOOOOOOO!!」

I'm impressed his breath lasted that long - that sort of inappropriate impression popped into my mind. A knight came towards me continuously shouting while he brandished his sword. From the little of him that I could see through the slit in his helmet, he was an old knight with considerable wrinkles etched into his face from age. Despite looking so old, there was nobody who rampaged across this battlefield more youthfully than him. I remember that figure, or rather, that sword technique. A long time ago, back when I was still an ogre, there was an old knight who had cornered me.

「MMM! Towering over the rest! I take it you are the one who leads this troop of demons! My name is Nyudoz! I request a formal duel!」

Ah, so stuffy..... The old knight Nyudoz who has gotten close to my position, has formally applied for a proper duel without concern for the situation around him. How should I put it - he can't read the mood. This isn't a situation in which to go all fair and square. Asking for a battle in the middle of a melee, are you an idiot? He must be an idiot.

However, this extreme foolishness is somehow refreshing. He might be an idiot, but he is a consistently single-minded person I bet. Living his life while staying true to his beliefs, honest to a fault. I'm a bit, no, quite jealous. He's completely different to me who is constantly wavering and hesitating.

「I accept!」

I deliberately responded to him, because I felt that I wanted to. I wanted to try having a fair and square match with this person.

Nyudoz-san doesn't seem to have realised that I am someone he fought with in the past. I was an ogre then anyway, so I look different now. Well, I have no intention of telling him that. Whatever happened in the past, I'm sure this person wouldn't care about it.

I guess this is a revenge match for me. Thinking of it like that is a strange feeling, but what I have to do doesn't change.

「Here I come!」

Nyudoz-san nimbly approaches me. He comes at a speed unthinkable for an old man, or rather, for someone wearing such heavy armour. Humans might have status values inferior to demons, but the speed of that approach is far faster any untrained demon could manage. I wonder just how many there are within the 8th Army who could make such an approach.

「!?」

Even so, that doesn't reach me. Compared to when I was an ogre, I have become far stronger. My magic sword cuts through Nyudoz-san's sword. I'm sure he has quite a famous sword, but with a single stroke using my status and magic sword to bulldoze through, that sword is cut in half.

Next, Nyudoz-san's head is cleaved off. Without even being able to offer any resistance, Nyudoz-san's head falls.

The least I could do was to grant him a peaceful and painless death. Though it might be presumptuous for me to think such a thing. That was the least I could do though.

It seems that for the human army, Nyudoz-san was an important figure, as the soldiers who saw his death were shaken, and then collapsed. As soon as one section fell, the rest of the human army fell like dominos. Thus, our 8th Army became victorious.

Translation notes:

Nyudoz first shows up in "Empire knights vs Ogre". He speaks like a very old fashioned knight.

"Towering over the rest" - this is a liberal translation. Nyudoz is actually commenting on Wrath's "haki" (same kanji as the term in One Piece) but it's not being used as a reference to One Piece - it was a pre-existing word with a proper meaning, though hard to translate.

The Human-Demon Great War - The Situation Of Sophia

「Say.」

「What?」

「Just why are we here, I wonder?」

「You should have heard the particulars already.」

I have heard them, I have! Why are we not on the battlefield, and here in a town instead I wonder? In particular, together with this woman!

「Could you not glare at me please?」

「I can't help glaring. Aren't you looking the other way anyway?」

「Merely being in your field of vision is unpleasant for me, so you entering my field of vision is also unpleasant.」

This bitch sure is talking big. Perhaps I should strangle her to death here? That sounds good.

「Oh, please refrain from getting any strange ideas about me. Goshujin-sama is looking after all.」

Saying so, Felmina suddenly takes a small white spider out from her clothes and shows it. That is definitely one of goshujin-sama's clones. If I make a move on this impertinent girl here, then goshujin-sama won't ignore it. As if slamming into the irritation with nowhere to go, I start scowling even harder.

If asked why we are here in this town right in the midst of the war, I can only say that it's because of goshujin-sama's instructions. Just when I thought I'd finally be able to rampage again, I never even thought that I might be kept from the battlefield. Furthermore, to deal with an opponent who we're not even sure whether they'll really come or not, of all things.

Since the fight with Kyouya-kun, I've not been able to satisfy my battle desires. Or rather, even with that fight with Kyouya-kun, because it was interrupted before the best part I've still not fully appreciated it. Also, probably in future as well, I've come to believe that I won't be able to experience a more

fulfilling battle than that one.

A fight with an almost equal opponent. Alternating between hope and fear at the opponent's unforeseen actions, the ecstasy of breaking through those moments. Such an exhilarating feeling - sucking blood doesn't come close. If that's how it is in the midst of battle, I wonder just how incredible a sensation I will be able to experience at the moment of victory? Just imagining is enough to make my body tremble.

Yet in the end, because of that Kuro guy everything was ruined. All my built-up excitement was lost in an instant. Because of which, I don't expect I'll be able to experience a fight with such good conditions again in future. Since the only one in the world who can fight with me equally, is Kyouya-kun alone. The rest are either weaker than me, or those who are too strong starting with goshujin-sama. There's no opponents nearby who can compete with me like Kyouya-kun, or otherwise give me a good fight. Even with Kyouya-kun, because he's darn well gotten his sanity back, he can't even fight me with the intent to kill like back then. There's only opponents that I'll definitely beat or definitely be defeated by.

That's why, in terms of fights that can satisfy me, that was the first one and last one. Because I let that chance escape, all that I can vent in battle is just the everyday accumulated stress. All I can do is clear out the negative feelings, and it never becomes positive. I thought that'd at least be better than nothing, yet I was even kept away from the battlefield of all things. Does goshujin-sama hate me I wonder? Ah, I better not think about this too deeply. If it turns out that she really does hate me then I'll cry.

「It seems, that they came.」

The clone of goshujin-sama that's attached to Felmina is making animated movements, as if trying to convey something. Oh my, it's kinda cute. Totally, not.

「I see. I guess I'll be able rampage a bit then.」

「This direction it seems.」

They come from the direction that goshujin-sama's clone indicates. We're in corner of the town. A deserted housing district away from the public gaze. A

group of hooded men are coming out through an open door from one of the houses.

「I can do them in, right?」

In response to my verification, goshujin-sama's clone nods in assent. Seeing that, I throw myself at the suspicious hooded group. I strike my sword into the closest hood. It's a large sized magic sword that Kyouya-kun made for me. Combining my power and the magic sword's power, the hooded man meets the ground.

That wasn't a slip of the tongue, okay? It seems I used a bit too much force huh. I had intended to cut him, but he was smashed into an unidentifiable mess buried in the ground. Yup, this was overkill I guess?

「Humph. It was a setup huh.」

The guy who seems to be the leader of the hoods calmly mutters that despite having seen the condition his comrade was reduced to.

「But, even though the information was bait it wasn't false. Get her.」

To the leader hood's orders, the remaining hoods simultaneously rush at me. I mow them down with one swing of my magic sword. In addition, a chakram comes flying from behind my back and scores a direct hit on one of them, chopping off his head. I guess Felmina is going to provide covert supporting fire.

The beheaded man topples, and at that moment his hood comes off. The uncovered man, had long ears. The trait of elves. The ones who attacked me, were a group of elves.

Goshujin-sama allowed the elves gain bait information. That when the demons simultaneously invade the humans, I would then be in this town. That for the elves who gained that information, should they want to try to do something about me, then come and settle things. We didn't know whether they would come or not, but the elves believed the false information and thus they came waltzing in. Well, since I am actually here, it's not really false information. Their leader also said that the information was bait but it wasn't false anyway.

It seems that goshujin-sama expected that if information about a reincarnator

such as me was spread out, then the elves would make a move. Since it was a critical situation, then I wouldn't have Ariel-san's protection.

I merely swung my sword, and the elves who attacked me were defeated. Weak. How boring... the instant I thought that, my face was suddenly punched.

Eh? Huh?

Unable to understand the situation, my face went blank. That was also for an instant, as the shock from when I clumsily fell onto the ground allowed me to regain my senses. Immediately I tried to take a stance, and right in front of my eyes a foot was incoming.

「!？」

I used the magic sword to guard against the impending foot. Even though the edge was held out, the opponent's foot wasn't cut.

The magic sword and foot pressed against each other. Looking up at the opponent, there with his face half-concealed by the hood, was an expressionless man. It was their leader.

I put strength into my arm, forcing back the leaders foot. The leader doesn't fight my strength, and steps back.

I never thought that I could be punched so defenselessly. I'm a bit surprised at the opponent's speed being more than expected. However, there's almost no damage. I was just careless. That's right, if I hadn't been careless then there's no way a guy like this could have punched me.

Still, isn't this guy a bit too hard? Why couldn't the magic sword cut him? How strange.

Somehow I'm getting rather irritated. So as to confront that irritation, I slash at the leader.

The leader faces his palm out towards me, and something comes flying out from a hole there. Without time to avoid, something pierces my body. I can tell that my HP decreased even without looking at Appraisal.

What, was that? A laser? But, it doesn't matter. Ignoring the damage, I brandish the magic sword. That's enough for even this leader guy to show a hint

of surprise on his face. Using all my strength I strike at the leader's body with the magic sword. After going through a sense of hardness, it feels like it was destroyed. The leader's body is cut right in half, and sent flying by the impact.

After a pause for breath, I chase after the leader's body. There, with just half remaining, the leader rolls over. Seeing the cross-section of his body, it's a mechanical body. No wonder it was so hard. Half this man's body has been turned into a cyborg. Although I had heard from goshujin-sama that the elves had advanced mechanical technology, until I saw it for myself I was half in doubt.

「This, was a huge miscalculation. I never expected this body to be defeated.」
「Oh my? You're still alive in that state?」

I'm surprised. To think he'd still be alive after having lost half his body. Cyborgs are amazing huh.

「It seems it was a blunder to let Ariel get hold of you. Failing to kill you at that time seems to have been a terrible mistake.」

「Indeed. I'll be coming to destroy the elves soon or later, so look forwards to that time.」

Then again, you'll have died here. Striking with the magic sword, I make sure to finish him off this time for real.

「Are you done?」
「I am.」

Felmina suddenly turns up, taking a glance at the corpse of the dead leader, or rather the wreckage.

「For now, let's collect this and leave.」
「Indeed.」

There's many things that goshujin-sama doesn't mention, but for me to be the bait this time, I guess it was for the sake of collecting this then? In order to learn what their level of technology is. Just how far ahead is she looking when planning future actions. Ally she may be, but she's terrifying.

Translation notes:

Yes, Felmina also uses “goshujin-sama” to refer to Shiro, which is quite odd for someone in a military organisation though perhaps her usage of that term predates joining the military? It makes things a bit confusing to read though. Is she subtly trying to compete with Sophia or was it something Shiro requested?

The Human-Demon Great War - The Situation Of Blow

Since when I was born I have been looking at my aniki's back. The figure of aniki as he made every effort to get the demon race back on their feet, after they were ruined by war after war after war. There was no Demon King. In the absence of the Demon King who should normally gather the demons, aniki continued to serve in that position instead. As far as I know, there is nobody who has worked harder for the demons than aniki. I also saw the figures of the incompetent fools who disparaged aniki because there was no Demon King.

Aniki is not the Demon King. Which is why there were many demons who went against him. During that shitty time, those shitty bastards opposed aniki. Are they fools? Even a fool like me could tell that for the demon race back then, that insurrection and shit was a bad idea, so why couldn't they understand that?

The demons were desolated, in a state where even being able to eat was a problem. While gritting his teeth in pain, aniki supported them. Eventually, the common people recovered enough so that at least they wouldn't starve.

Just when that happened, she fucking appeared. The girl who called herself the Demon King. She had the appearance of a brat, and was a brat on the inside as well. Yet, aniki bowed his head before such a person.

While in a fit of rage, a rational part of me commented, ah, so this is what it's like for the red mist to descend on someone. Until now, the one who had supported the demons, the one who had guided them, was aniki. Everything that aniki had built up, was taken away by that woman, just because she was the Demon King, for that reason alone. Not only that, but all the demons that aniki had desperately revived were then assembled, for some shit about invading the humans. Just when we'd finally been blessed with peace at long long last.

The peace that was finally within our grasp. That was helplessly ruined by the

Demon King. The Demon King that aniki obeyed. I couldn't accepted it. There was no way that I could.

Both the wench who called herself the Demon King, and the freeloading white girl who appeared at the same time, both of them did absolutely nothing. Instead, they devoured the precious food. Just by being here she was causing harm, and on top of that she was basically ordering us demons to die. Why did aniki so readily obey such a woman, was something incomprehensible right from the start.

「Blow, I've told you many times that that person has a strength that we cannot possibly hope to match. If we defy her, it's the end of the demons. No matter how unreasonable the request, I will comply with it. Please understand that.」

Over and over again, aniki would say such things to persuade me. I get it you know. Aniki of all people, wouldn't just obey someone for no reason at all.

But, just because you have power it doesn't mean that anything and everything will be forgiven you know? Just what on earth did us demons do to deserve this? I know that our distant ancestors committed some mistake, and that the demons and humans have constantly had to fight each other. However, that shouldn't matter for those of us living today, surely. I don't even know what our ancestors caused, but why is it necessary for their descendants to carry that sin? Not only that, but now when even at the best of times it's hard to say whether the demons will live or die, on the day when war breaks out with the humans, the demons will face ruin whatever happens. The Demon King doesn't get that.

No, maybe she gets it but is doing it anyway. Maybe aniki is prepared for that, and is putting all his efforts into trying to reduce the damage as much as possible. I'm no fool. In spite of that Demon King's small appearance, I can somehow tell that she's an outrageous monster. Even so, as the one who will lead the demons into ruin, I could never respect the Demon King.

Now that it's already come to this, there's no way for the demons to survive other than by winning. Reduce the damage as much as possible, and win against the humans. In order to do that, it would mean reducing the humans to

despair, by dealing them a massive shock. The most suitable opponent for that, is right here.

「Shiro. Don't get involved.」

I speak out to Shiro who is beside me. She's an affiliate of the Demon King. However, thanks to the intelligence that she gained, both aniki and I have been seriously saved. It was at least worth enough that I could ignore her being a glutton.

Shiro herself and the 10th Army that she commands, are probably a group that specialises in intelligence and assassination. Shiro herself is like an elusive phantom with her teleport magic. That's definitely for performing both intelligence and assassination. However, it takes a massive amount of skill points to gain teleport magic. To the extent that other skills have to be sacrificed. Most likely, her combat ability is low. Except when using surprise attacks with teleport, she's probably inferior to the other army commanders. I can't imagine her being able to take on the Hero.

I am now going to challenge the Hero. According to the messenger's report, I know that the Hero together with his comrades are routing the soldiers while advancing here.

I must defeat the Hero myself. With the achievement of defeating the Hero, I'll be able to use that against the Demon King. If I don't do anything, and just do whatever that Demon King says, then eventually the demons will be destroyed. Even if only a little, I will drive a wedge into that.

As to whether I can actually defeat the Hero, it'll be hard to be honest. However, I can't allow myself to pull back. For this achievement, the demons, no, aniki is depending upon me.

「You're the Hero, right?」

I use the human language to address him. The one who appeared, is a young man who gives off an impression of nobility even on this battlefield.

「To think that you would deliberately ask in the human language, huh. That's right. I'm the Hero. The Hero Julius Zagan Anareich.」

Whether it unexpected that I could speak the human language, or unexpected

that I would deliberately use the human language, after showing a brief look of surprise on his face, the Hero introduced himself. He has a gentle appearance, but I can definitely feel a strong determination in his eyes. That's definitely the style of a Hero. I nod my head, and prepare my sword.

「I'm the Commander of the 7th Army, Blow. Now then, Hero, let's have a fair match!」

「I accept!」

Getting the Hero's acceptance, a one-on-one fight begins. First to move wins! I slash at the Hero. However, that was easily stopped, and instead I'm being outmatched and forced back. Damn! I guess he's above me in pure physical offensive status values.

With my stance broken, the Hero approaches in pursuit. To match blades when I lose in strength, is a bad move. I avoid the exchange, dodging the strike. When I do, the light that is coiled around the Hero's sword separates, rushing at me. I immediately use the sword as a shield to guard.

Dangerous! That just now was probably some kind of magic skill. And, based on the strength, I realise that the Hero's forte is actually in magic. Both physically and magically, he's above me. Even so, I can't allow myself to lose.

As if sneering at my determination, the Hero forms multiple balls of light. Hey, you gotta be joking. I can tell that each one of those balls of light contains a huge amount of power. They come flying at me simultaneously.

If I avoid them, the guys to my rear will be engulfed. Behind me, is Shiro.

I discard the option to avoid them. I stop the incoming balls of light with my sword. For an instant, my vision jolts. Without being able to understand what happened, I can only comprehend the pain coursing through my entire body. That repeats many times.

Just for an instant I blank out. The moment I realised it, I was lying on my face on the ground. My body is in tatters. But, but!

「I'm not done, yet.」

While recovering my wounds, I stand up. I can't allow myself to pull back here. If I'm defeated, who will support aniki? If I'm defeated, who will face the

Hero next? I can't allow myself to be defeated.

「You shouldn't force yourself. You should have understood the difference in strength.」

「I haven't lost yet! If I go back defeated so miserably like this, I won't be able to face aniki!」

Even if he didn't tell me, the difference in strength is obvious!

「If you have a brother then isn't that all the more reason to not allow yourself to die here? Withdraw your army. I won't pursue.」

「I can't allow myself to pull back here!」

Even if I know I'll lose, I can't allow myself to pull back! I head towards the Hero. The Hero's magic and his sword both together drive me away. Even so I simply stand up again, facing him. Again and again.

I can't allow myself to pull back here. I can't!

「It's over.」

「I'm, not, done, yet」

「It is over. I warned you. You simply ignored it, and were defeated.」

Warn, ed? There, is, no, way, I, could, listen, to, that.

「Da, a, mm, it. Ani...」

Aniki.....

Shiro.....

Chapter 273 - War Observations

Via my clones I simultaneously follow the scenes of all the battlefields. Argnar's 1st Army is having a close fight. Of all the places being attacked it's most difficult one anyway, so it can't be helped. Rather, that it's not worse than a close fight shows how great Argnar's command skills are. If it was me then I'd have lost long ago.

The 2nd Army, is unbelievably a monkey army. Yep. Those monkeys that I fought with in the past on the lower layer of the Elro Great Labyrinth, they were instigated to attack the fort, and the army itself was able to make the human fort fall without taking any injuries. Those monkeys are seriously tenacious about going after anyone who kills a member of their tribe, making them a real nuisance to others. Because of that, when I fought them in the lower layer, that's why they kept on attacking until they were annihilated you see. On top of that, they breed after a fixed interval and multiply, and it's said that when those descend on human populations there's nothing more troublesome.

As far as I can see through my clones, the fort that the 2nd Army was responsible for is being held by monkeys. The number of monkeys is staggering. The vast number of monkeys is incomparable to the amount that I fought and are crammed into the fort. A tidal wave of monkeys. Woah, I sure feel for the humans who were in the fort after all that. The boobian who set that up, sure is something huh. Well, I'm sure that was something she came up with as self-protection because she didn't want to be killed by the Demon King though.

For the 3rd Army, the idiot giant charged at the castle walls himself and smashed them. From there he gained control of the fort like an avalanche. What a crazy feat of strength. What's with the general going at the very front of the attack?

The 4th Army, Mera's place, had an unexpected defeat. Two reincarnators also participated in the war, and on top of that a surprisingly strong magician woman was also there. Not even Mera could handle all three together and was forced to retreat. By ignoring the damage to the army, I'm sure that Mera

would have won if he'd continued to fight though. But since Mera's gotten all serious about being a general of the demon army, he could only choose to retreat. It's not like killing the reincarnators was allowed either.

For the 5th Army, it's becoming a close fight like with the 1st Army. Their opponents are weaker than the 1st Army's, but they're still being pressed. In the areas of quality of soldiers and quality of the general, the 1st Army is far superior after all I guess. When all's said and done, Argnar is excellent.

For the 6th Army, pitiful shota. I had thought that the enemy general looked rather familiar, and it turned out to be the ossan who came to me in the past to apply for an apprenticeship. At that time he was an ossan who was a step from being an old man, but now he's totally a jijii. In spite of being a jijii he was really hustling, and shot the shota to death. Somehow, it seems like this ojii-san has gotten stronger since I last saw him, huh? I had thought that his magic ability was pretty high for a human before, but now it seems that he's improved still further.

The 8th Army, oni-kun's place is, erm, well, do your best soldier boys. Oni-kun is a brute. Well, he's an oni after all. I've got no place saying this, but that's really cruel, okay.

That's the basic progress of the battles from each place, but there was another important battle, at a secret place. The elves got caught in the intelligence that I spread. The elves are rather persistent about the reincarnators, so I wondered whether or not they would bite if I spread some intelligence saying "vampire girl is here!", but the results were better than expected. What vampire girl crushed, was a body possessed by Potimas. One converted to a cyborg even.

I knew that the elves had technology from the old civilisation, but how far it had developed was a mystery. Even for my clones that I inserted into the elf village, they've not been able to gain entry into the facility where such things are likely kept. I had been thinking that maybe they have one, two or even three worthless weapons hidden there, but I actually managed to lure one to come waltzing out. The body of Cyborg Poti was collected by vampire girl and Felmina-chan, so I'll try to analyse it later. Depending on that, I might be able to figure out the technology level of the elves.

Still, for something like that to come out, that shows just how much Potimas wanted to deal with vampire girl I guess. Somehow, I've got a bad feeling. Why are they so persistent about the reincarnators? Why are they being kept caged up? There must be something. My clones are secretly keeping watch over the reincarnators who are in the elf village, so if somebody tries something I can protect them. It seems that I better be careful.

「Shiro. Don't get involved.」

While following the other battlefields, a voice to the side calls out to me. Ah, the Hero will reach here soon, huh. It seems that the hoodlum plans to meet with him.

Hrm. To be honest, if I go and do it myself it would be the fastest way though. But his face is filled with such determination. There's no stopping him.

「10th Army, do not interfere before it's over.」

While seeing the hoodlum off as he steps forwards in front of the Hero, I give an order to the 10th Army.

「Are you sure?」

The one advising such, was Waldo-kun. With vampire girl being elsewhere this time, he became my assistant. Waldo-kun knows about my strength indirectly. At any rate, his beloved vampire girl should have explained to him that she's no match for me. Which is why, he knows that I can even beat the Hero. However.

「His pride?」

「Eh?」

「Then what about his pride?」

It seems that he couldn't understand my question. Waldo-kun makes a puzzled expression.

The hoodlum has a huge amount riding on this battle. I can certainly beat the Hero. However, if I then defeat the Hero and save the hoodlum, the hoodlum's pride will be damaged.

There's no point in merely living. Without pride, life has no meaning. There was a time once when I was desperate just to stay alive, and didn't even have

the luxury to have pride. However, a life without pride, is empty.

The old me merely wanted to live. After all, I had nothing except for my life. My memories, my soul, everything was fake. Except for my life, I had nothing to protect. However, My Home was burned, and that first time when I experienced a sense of failure, I realised it. That, there's no point in merely living.

I can save the hoodlum's life. However, at the same time that is a deed that will stain the hoodlum's pride. It's up to each person which one to choose, but I choose to take pride. Even if the hoodlum dies as a result. Even though we're the ones who have been trampling on his hopes to date.

The peace that the hoodlum desires, the respect he has for his elder brother Balto. I am not able to grant those. The Demon King and I, can't allow it. We are the ones trampling on the hoodlum's pride. For this reason, I want to protect his self-respect in his last moments. A one-on-one duel to the death with the Hero. I won't do something so boorish as to intervene.

As a result, he died.

Against an opponent that he couldn't beat, again and again he was overwhelmed. But even then, until his last moments, he stood up again and again without giving up. As though, it was his will, and his pride, that allowed him to.

Thank you for everything. I pray that you will be able to find happiness in the next life, Blow.

Translation notes:

Shiro uses several different words to refer to Ronant, so just to recap: ossan means "uncle" or "middle aged man" though is a rather rude term, jijii means "grandfather" or "old man" and is also rather rude, with ojii-san being a politer equivalent.

"Oni-kun is a brute. Well, he's an oni after all" - this is a play on words since the word for "brute" includes the kanji character for "oni". So it's rather like saying "Demon-kun is demonic. Well, he's a demon after all".

In case you've forgotten, "My Home" refers to the large nests that Shiro built

as a spider.

“Thank you for everything” - in Japanese, this is a phrase used to thank someone for the work they’ve done - eg, on a project, or for the day. You could say that it implies that the person is going to get some rest now.

Chapter 274 - Hero Killing

Blow has died. Having confirmed that with my own eyes, I take a step forwards.

The Hero notices me. There is an expression of astonishment on his face. It seems that he has realised by instinct, that I am the same being as the Nightmare of the Labyrinth who once defeated him.

The Hero Julius also recognises my clones, as whenever he sees one he relentlessly pursues and gets rid of them. The non-combat orientated clones used for monitoring, cannot beat the Hero. Owing to that, I couldn't keep track of the Hero through monitoring. Most likely, he has a strong impression remaining of not being able to even lay a finger on me, so I think he gained a sensitivity to my existence.

Therefore, it was in my expectations that he might immediately break into an escape on noticing me. Within the accelerated time, I gaze upon the Hero who has a desperate look. I'm sorry to say, but no matter how much he tries to muster his strength, the Hero can never defeat me.

I open my eyes. The least kindness I can do, is to give him a painless death. With my improved Evil Eyes, I assault the Hero with the Evil Eye of Extinction. There are two attributes that I didn't lose once I became a god. Darkness and Corrosion. To be precise, Darkness and Death. The attributes that Evil God D rules over.

The Evil Eye of Destruction grants death to the Hero, and his body is destroyed. Compared to the power of D herself it might be weak, but it is still undoubtedly the power of god. There is no reason why the Hero could withstand it as he is not even a god.

The Hero has been finished off without a doubt, and also the comrades with him have been dealt with the same way. There was one person who withstood it, but that was also within expectations. What was unexpected, lies in a much different place.

「Take care of the rest.」

「Eh?」

Due to the emergency situation, I delegate all battlefield operations to Waldo-kun, and teleport. Where I've appeared is a huge room with an enormous magic circle filling it that looks like a geometric pattern. In the center, is the upper half of the body of a woman.

In the bottom level of the Elro Great Labyrinth, deeper within there exists the place where the Goddess is sealed. The core of the System that supports this world.

I quickly approach the Goddess. The top half of her body, has diminished since the last time I saw her. Much more than I had expected.

Suppressing the rage that feels like it might boil in an instant, I grab the Goddess's chin. I would like to believe that I still have my composure since I didn't just crush her with my hand like that.

「Do you actually realise, what you have done?」

I couldn't hold back from using a threatening voice. I open my eyes, and glare right at the Goddess. With her vacant stare, the Goddess merely continues to murmur System messages.

「Don't fuck with me!」

I didn't use a loud voice. However, my voice probably contained as much anger as possible.

Just who, for what reason, and for whose sake, do you think this war is for? This Goddess has ruined all of that. All this groundwork was for none other than liberating the Goddess from the System, yet she's fucking ruined that all by herself.

The purpose of this war, is for reducing the number of humans and demons who can fight, while simultaneously securing energy, and reducing the number of people who will be harmed by destroying the System. In addition, by means of defeating the Hero, I could delete the Hero related requirements from the System, and secure the energy related to that. I have various other reasons for doing this, but those of the two main ones. Both were plans to gather a lot of

energy quickly.

However, despite that, the amount of energy collected was less than I had expected. It had been lessened. Because the Goddess had needlessly intervened. The Goddess obstructed the dismantling of the Hero System. Using her body, and a portion of the recent influx of energy.

Since her intentions can't be communicated I can only guess, but most likely the Goddess fully understands what I'm trying to do. Well, since I'm hacking the System and various other things, it would be strange for the Goddess who is the core of the System to not know. The problem is, not only does she know, but she has begun to intervene against my actions.

「Do you hate it when people die that much? Even though you know just for whose sake it is that they're all killing each other?」

I tighten the grip on my hand holding the Goddess's chin. Even though the Demon King has taken actions while being resolved to die, this woman has rendered those actions futile. As if I could forgive that. What a fucked up situation.

「Take a good look.」

I project an image in front of the Goddess's eyes. Projected there is a battlefield. The battlefield where the 1st Army are fighting. Even by itself it's gruesome enough that I'm sure that for this Goddess it's painful to watch.

However, I'm not done yet. To that battlefield, I summon a Queen Taratekt. Next, I give it an order to trample down the demons and humans indiscriminately.

「Don't you avert your eyes okay? Because you did something unnecessary, I've been forced to take even more lives. This scene, is due to your desires, and what you caused.」

There is no objection. However, a slight action of her shaking her head in denial can be seen. So that she won't be able to take her eyes off the images even for a second, I put my strength into the hand holding her chin.

What a foolish Goddess. While wishing for peace more than anyone else, she more than anyone else is the perpetrator who is forcing the people of this

world to walk down a blood smeared path. Even if it means taking D's malicious salvation. This time was also the same. If she'd kept quiet then I would never have had any intention to commit this atrocity. I still had many things that I had wanted Argnar to do after all. I've been unexpectedly forced to crush them.

The reason why I didn't crush the 2nd Army or 5th Army, was because I thought it was better that way considering what happens next. The 1st Army demons are the elite. And so is the human army that they're facing. That being the case, by annihilating them the amount of energy that can be recovered is large. In order to recover the most amount of energy with the fewest number of deaths, the only option was to crush the 1st Army.

Sorry, Argnar. In order to grant the future you wish for the demons, the only option was to abandon you. Even then, depending upon the situation I still might not be able to grant your wish.

Without sparing her anything I make the Goddess watch the trampling of every living being by the Queen Taratekt. Even when everything is finished, for a while I forced her to continue watching the scene filled with corpses.

「Don't do anything uncalled for. Realise that each time that you do the number of casualties will increase.」

I roughly release my grip from her chin. Somehow, those eyes of hers that were vacant from the start, seem to have become even more like eyes of a dead fish. Serves you right. Even still, my irritation doesn't calm down. I'm so angry that I can almost talk normally. For such a pathetic reason, I was forced to sacrifice Argnar. Damn her.

Leaving that aside, I must quickly find out who the new Hero is. I gotta get in touch with the Divine Word Religion, and have them search.

While thinking about future plans, one of my clones detects an abnormality. It's the clone that is keeping watch on Yamada-kun. While in class, Yamada-kun suddenly stood up and began to act suspiciously.

It can't be. It can't be, it can't be, it can't be!?

「You, you!」

I punch the Goddess, hard.

「Just how much do you have to interfere until you're satisfied! Just how badly will you crush people's feelings until you're satisfied! Do you really want to save people's lives that much!? Why can't you understand that is exactly what is driving people to their deaths!?!」

I resist the urge to kill this Goddess right here, right now. If I actually did that, then what was the point of all the things I've done until now.

This Goddess, in addition to continuing the Hero System, specified the next fucking Hero to be Yamada-kun. Yamada-kun, a reincarnator. She definitely chose a reincarnator knowing that I can't or won't kill him. Even though the Goddess should know why it is that I'm trying to decisively revoke the Hero System. To recover energy? That's certainly one of the reasons. However, the biggest reason, is to prevent the Demon King from being killed. Due to the System, a Demon King can always be killed by a Hero. Even if that Demon King has status values that are vastly superior to the Hero's. In order to get rid of that fear, that's why I've been doing all this to try to get rid of the Hero System.

「Do you want the Demon King to die that much!? The Demon King who, more than anybody else, has been trying so hard for so long for your sake!」

I hear my teeth grinding. If I stay here any longer, I really will start wanting to kill the Goddess. I turn my back on the Goddess, and teleport away from that place. I didn't even want to see what kind of expression the Goddess had.

Translation notes:

Evil Eye of Destruction was last mentioned in 214.

It's probably worth pointing out that the one survivor from the Hero's party (Hyrinth) had a "phoenix feather" to protect him, as mentioned in S19.

Chapter 275 - The Conclusion Of The Human-Demon Great War

By the time I returned by teleport, the battle was mostly concluded. Having lost the Hero and his comrades, the human army had lost their spirit. In contrast to that, standing in reserve until then at the rear of the 7th Army, was the uninjured 10th Army. However, every member of the 10th Army are crack troops trained by my own hands. The human army, which was in low morale with losing the Hero, didn't have the strength to stop the 10th Army.

「Welcome back.」

I was greeted by Waldo-kun who had taken command. Just what you'd expect of an ex-, er, actually current, young noble from a prestigious school. Commanding troops is no big deal. I guess he wasn't Felmina-chan's fiance for nothing huh.

Unfortunately however, since the amount of time I had to train him was much less than for Felmina-chan, his status values have fallen behind a lot. Even so, since he's already improved to the same level as an ordinary 10th Army soldier, that shows that on top of being raised to a vampire, his original talent was significant. Well, saying that, a certain other vampire senpai of his is a long way ahead, so I guess Waldo-kun is going to have various troubles though.

When I check the status of the other battlefields via the clones, at the 2nd Army's place the fort is held by monkeys and at the 3rd Army's place the humans have abandoned the fort and have begun to retreat. Mera had ordered the 4th Army to withdraw, and they're currently retreating. It seems like the 5th Army has begun to retreat. For the 6th Army, it seems that the deputy commander has given the order to retreat in place of the dead shota. For the 8th Army, it feels like oni-kun has overdid it and completely exterminated their opponents. Because I summoned the Queen Taratekt to the 1st Army, they've been completely destroyed along with the opponent's fort. You could say that all the battlefields have reached a conclusion.

Here too, the close combat is over. The 7th Army, which was thrown into confusion by the Hero, rallied together when the Hero died and counterattacked. They cooperated with the 10th Army, and have almost completed mopping up the human forces who came out from the fort. There's still the battle with the lot holding up in the fort, but since they've lost the Hero, I don't think they'll hold out for long. Both in combat strength and mental strength.

The final results, are that the demons won in four places including here. The humans won in three places. I guess you could call the place where both sides were annihilated a draw. Saying it that way it does seem like it was quite a close contest, but the overall damage the humans have suffered is larger I guess. For a start, they had heavy casualties even at the places where they won. However, considering the lower population of the demons, the damage the demons have suffered is not something to make light of. If not for irregulars like me and oni-kun, I guess the demons and humans would have suffered about the same amount of damage.

By itself, that's just as planned. While the boobian of the 2nd Army's unexpected tactics gave them total victory, it would be too much to say that it was beyond the expectations. Where the plan went amiss for sure, was when I ended up having to kill Argnar. This is a war after all, so of course I had thought about the possibility that Argnar could die in battle. However, I would have never thought that I would be forced into actions like crushing him by my own hand.

It's become necessary to hasten the plan. The expectation was for the demons to gather around Argnar and Balto, but since one of those two is gone, it will take a long time to assemble the demons. It will also take a long time to reorganise the wounded armies. Normally what we should do is to be cautious of a counterattack from the humans, and only once organised for defence as much as possible would we then attack the elf village, but it might not be possible to use such a deliberate method. I guess it might be better to make haste, and only organise our war resources that are able to invade the elf village, and basically decide that it can't be helped if the defence becomes neglected.

I also have to think of how to deal with the probable new Hero Yamada-kun. I gotta make sure that he and the Demon King never meet no matter what. At the same time in that country there is the operation to crush the secret maneuvers of Potimas, so I'll put Natsume-kun and Imouto-chan to work. Natsume-kun has acquired the Seven Deadly Sins skills of Lust and Greed. Now he'll move stealthily, in order to store up power. If I can use my reins on him to guide down a convenient route, then he'll probably be able to do a good job. As for the reins holder, I guess I'll let Imouto-chan do it.

I also can't fail to meet up with the Divine Word Religion at least once huh. I gotta explain about the new Hero for a start, and perhaps we might be able to get them to cooperate with us. Even without that, with this war over there is the agreement to invade the elf village, so we gotta hammer out the details for that. For the demon army to deploy to the elf village which is in the human territory, it is essential to have the cooperation of the Divine Word Religion after all. If I wanted to I could use my teleportation to send them in, but then I would be forced to consume quite a large amount of energy, so I'd prefer not to.

Ah, speaking of the elves. I also gotta analyse the body of Cyborg Poti that vampire girl and Felmina-chan collected. Machines are totally out of my area of expertise, but I bet it's made using magecraft infused super-science, right? In which case I should be able to analyse it somewhat. If I can determine what kinds of magecraft have been performed, then I'll be able to understand just how dangerous that substitute was. I already have a rough idea of the threat it poses from the battle scene with vampire girl though. If there's a problem, then it's the fact that I don't have the slightest idea just how many of those super-science weapons the elves possess. I guess the only way to find out is by running into them. Well, the Demon King is also here, so if I also participate in the war then I'm sure we would never lose though.

Finally, I gotta reconsider the situation with the System. I never considered the possibility that the Goddess would actually intervene. In the future, when it's the time to destroy the System, if the Goddess intervenes again then the plan could be ruined. To make sure that won't happen, I will probably have to prepare some kind of countermeasures. Unfortunately, I still don't have any

specific ideas on how to achieve that yet though. Is it actually even possible to prevent the intervention of the Goddess who is at the core of the System? But, I gotta do something. Shit! I've really been had.

Argh, there's so many things to do. Too many! Why is it so hectic? Everything's the fault of that shitty Goddess! I'd never say that in front of the Demon King and Kuro though, naturally. Sigh, without some kind of reward I just can't do this. I'll have the Demon King prepare something sweet I guess.

For the time being, I'll leave all the decision making regarding the capture of the fort to Waldo-kun. Yes, let's.

Translation notes:

I decided to translate 魔術 (majutsu) as "magecraft" to help differentiate it from 魔法 (mahou). Generally, magic using the System is 魔法 (mahou) and magic outside the System could be called 魔術 (majutsu). So Shiro thinks that the elves are using magical technology that doesn't depend upon the System. See Oshiete D-sensei! Lesson 1 for more info.

Chapter 276 - Granny, Don't Overdo It!

Via the clone that is watching over Yamada-kun, I guess I should say “as expected”, but it has been confirmed that Yamada-kun is the new Hero. Yamada-kun confessed that himself to a teacher, so it seems certain.

Leaving the capture of the fort to Waldo-kun, I teleport to the Demon King's place. At the very least, unless I discuss things with the Demon King then nothing can begin. On teleporting to the Demon King Army Headquarters where the Demon King is, the mood there had become excessively tense.

「You came at a good time. I have something to ask you.」

Kuro, who was together with the Demon King, took us to a deserted location. Balto stared at us as if wanting to ask us something, but in the end he let us pass without saying anything. I think that he's probably already heard about Blow's death via Telepathy.

「Was it necessary to throw that in?」

「"That"? What might that be? I won't get it from ju-u-ust that.」

In response to the question posed to me, the Demon King forcibly interjects. Although Kuro turns his gaze towards the Demon King for a moment, he soon turns his stare back to me and opens his mouth.

「The Queen Taratekt.」

「Oh, that huge spider-san, huh. What an amazing coincidence, huh. Who'd expect it to suddenly teleport onto a battlefield, eh」

「Don't play dumb.」

「Kuro-chan, scar-y-y-y. Shiro-chan, save me-e-e!」

The Demon King replies to the question asked to me, and Kuro continues to stare at me without glancing at that Demon King. Within that strange mood, I keep my silence. I have no intention of informing Kuro about the current situation.

「Shiro-chan, your onee-san wishes that you would at least give a response you know.」

「Don't change the subject.」

Perhaps sensing that I have no intention of replying to anything, Kuro turns to face the Demon King. Then the Demon King and Kuro begin an exchange. The Demon King shouldn't be aware of the reason why the Queen Taratekt committed that atrocity either, but it seems that she has no intention of complaining about it. Far from it, within all the words, gloomy thoughts appear and disappear with regards to the humans and demons. After having endured for such a long time, maybe she thinks that it's fine to kill a somewhat larger amount. Well, regardless of the Demon King's true feelings, if she's going to cover for me, then I have nothing to say.

「I guess you won't understand unless I put it in words, huh? Say, between bottomless kindness, and bottomless stupidity, don't you think there's a paper-thin difference?」

「I don't think so.」

After observing the exchange between the Demon King and Kuro for a while, the Demon King says something incredible. From her way of speaking it's almost as if she might know about the current situation. And also, that she might be criticising the Goddess's actions. Kuro might have denied the Demon King's words immediately, but for the Demon King to say such a thing in the first place, and just how odd that is for her, is surely something that he understands, right?

「Oh, really. However, perhaps you should keep the following in mind? Those who are saved with kindness alone, don't amount to much.」

「I was saved by that kindness. Also, doesn't that mean you're also denying ourselves?」

「I guess so. Which is exactly the reason why you and I are at odds with each other.」

「You have no intention of withdrawing, then?」

「None.」

「.....Very well. I will associate with you for a little longer.」

「Just what I'd expect of Kuro-chan! You're so-o reasonable!」

「However, if the time comes when I cannot agree at all, then I will show no mercy.」

「Gotcha. I pray that such a time won't ever happen.」

As soon as the conversation is over, Kuro leaves in a bad mood. Once the Demon King has seen him off, she heaves a big sigh of exhaustion.

「Sheesh. I thought I was gonna be killed.」

Although the Demon King is undoubtedly the strongest existence within this world, she's no match for Kuro who is a god outside of the laws of this world. Even though she was vigorously arguing with him, it seems that she was quite tense inside.

「Demon King.」

「It's okay. Don't say it.」

When I tried to explain about the situation, I was restrained by the Demon King.

「Or rather, I don't want you to say it, I guess. Because it feels like my determination will falter.」

Saying so, the Demon King turns her back towards me. With my eyes, even if her back is to me I can still tell her expression. The Demon King still has the same frivolous smile as ever. However, beneath the surface, I can tell that she's almost about to cry.

The Demon King had known. The reason why I had taken unexpected actions. That what those actions imply. That what she is trying to achieve, was rejected by none other than the person she was trying to save.

Even though she had known, she was scared of hearing me speak the truth. That if she actually did hear it, that then she would want to stop. And also, that if she had actually stopped, then the Demon King would probably no longer have anywhere to go to. I think it's because the Demon King understood that, that she refused to hear it.

However, putting it the other way around, it also means that she still has no intention of stopping. That even if the Goddess rejects it, she still intends to proceed.

She's so strong. The Demon King is strong. Putting aside things like being a

god, or status values, and so on, she is the strongest person I know. Dazzlingly strong. I envy that strength. Because there is nobody with more pride than the Demon King.

In my case, I don't yet have a belief that I can be puffed up with pride over. I have no pride. That might be the exact reason why I seriously want to help this proud Demon King.

With the Demon King still facing away from me, I embrace her closely.

「It'll be okay.」

Though I have never before done anything like comforting a person who is feeling down, I thought that now's the time that I should do this.

「I'll be with you.」

While there is the agreement with D as well, on top of that, with my own personal feelings, I intend to watch over the Demon King until her last moments. That's why, until that time comes I will always support the Demon King.

「If it's like this, then you can't tell which one of us is the onee-san you know.」

The Demon King says that jokingly. Since the Demon King has the appearance of a young girl after all. Seen from the side I would certainly be the onee-san instead. In actual age the Demon King is far greater though.

「Rather than onee-san, it's more like obaa-san though.」

Because I was born as a child to Mother, and it was the Demon King who gave birth to that Mother, it's correct to say that we have the relationship of grandmother and grandchild. So, arguing over who's the onee-san is wrong either way.

「Ahaha. That's a fair point.」

Granny smiles.

「Thank you.」

And so, granny thanked me. It's the least I could do. I'm a granny's girl after all.

The full conversation between the Demon King and Kuro can be seen in “Human-Demon Great War Secret”.

Shiro’s personal “strength of heart” power ratings:

Demon King > sensei > the Goddess = the pope > oni-kun >>>> The unsurpassable wall >>> vampire girl > loser (Kuro)

This is ultimately Shiro’s personal opinion, so other opinions are just as valid.

Translation notes:

In the original Japanese the title uses the internet lingo of “BBA” to refer to grandmother (ie Ariel) but that really doesn’t meaningfully translate at all. So within the text I’ve translated it as “granny” and most of the time that “obaa-san” (normal word for granny) is used in the original I’ve left it as obaa-san.

On a related note, Ariel has a tendency to playfully refer to herself as “onee-san” when talking to Shiro, as seen here. It does slightly add to the sense of Ariel both being playful and either slightly teasing Shiro or acting like a despairing elder sibling over the actions/attitude of a younger one, or alternatively, acting like a somewhat ditzy elder sister.

When Ariel refers to the Queen Taratekt as “spider-san” I had thought about leaving it as “kumo-san” but since Shiro used to be referred to that way before she got named, I felt it was better to do it this way. On a side note, while Shiro was a special case, it’s not normal to refer to animals (or monsters) with -san, though it’s something that children often do.

As the author notes at the end, some of the conversation between Kuro and Ariel here has already been seen in the chapter Human-Demon Great War Secret, previously translated by Turb0.

When Shiro calls herself a “granny’s girl” at the end, this is in the same sense of someone being a “daddy’s girl” for example.

Chapter 277 - Secret Manoeuvres Restart

Now then, with my mood restored I now have to begin the secret maneuvers again. First of all, I've requested the Demon King to requisition some sweets and to set up a conference with the Divine Word Religion. Regarding the sweets, I was given the reassuring words "Leave it to me!", so I'll wait with anticipation. For the Divine Word Religion, I expect it'll mean waiting until they reply. One of the doll spiders is dispatched to the Divine Word Religion currently, so keeping in contact is simple. Since they've only just finished with the war as well they might not be in the state to be able to quickly open the conference anyway, so I guess we can just leisurely wait for them. Actually, for us we still have to withdraw the whole army before it can march, so we're not in a state to be moving yet either.

Therefore, the only ones who can freely move around are pretty much just me, vampire girl and Felmina-chan. While in theory the Demon King could move if she wanted to, naturally the supreme commander can't just go wandering around of course. Eh? What about the 10th Army? I can just leave it all to Waldo-kun. Compared to me being in command, I'm sure he can move them more accurately instead anyway.

Such being the case, let's begin with having those who can move do what they can. Firstly, for the clones in charge of the region around the System, they'll investigate to see if there's a way to prevent the Goddess from tampering with the System any further. If it seems to be possible then they'll try to do that. Breaking the Hero System is impossible. Unless I can make use of the tiny gap when the Hero is being substituted, then it's impossible to destroy the Hero System. Since if I try to force it, it will then have a negative impact on the current Hero. In other words, on Yamada-kun. Even if that wasn't the case, it would still require consuming a huge amount of energy to destroy the Hero System, making it a situation of putting the cart before the horse, so I'm not going to do it.

So, my main body meets up with vampire girl and Felmina-chan. I collect

Potimas's body, and temporarily store it in another dimension. I'll analyse it later. For now, first of all I have to start preparations to do something about Yamada-kun's homeland.

「So in conclusion, go and entice the Empire.」

「I have no idea what you might be concluding though?」

Despite giving out my instructions, vampire girl can't even comprehend the words. What a useless person. Here you gotta use your feelings to perceive what the other person wants to convey. It's totally not the case that my words were insufficient. It's not, okay?

The human higher-ups in Yamada-kun's homeland have been infected by Potimas. While I don't know what Potimas is aiming for by doing that, it's obvious that it won't be anything good if it's taken any further, so I gotta do something about it before long. Specifically, secretly maneuver to wipe out Potimas's clones, by killing everyone who was corrupted by them. Such as the king.

I think to save any of the humans once they've been corrupted, is probably not impossible. I think so, but it would require putting in a considerable amount of effort for a start, and it would probably be possible to only save one person. When one is saved the others would surely be killed. In that case, it would be simpler to resign ourselves to losing the whole lot of them from the very start.

So, since it means wiping out the higher ups of the kingdom entirely, it's unavoidable for it to become a major incident. In addition, since they gotta be wiped out in one fell swoop, I'm sure it would become a considerably blatant incident. If they're not wiped out in one fell swoop, then Potimas will be able to pick up on it. Accordingly, I'm planning to have Natsume-kun take the role of the principal offender.

I've thought of directly doing it myself, but I want to conceal my existence from Potimas as much as possible. While he should have learnt about my existence to some extent with my recent killing of the Hero, he shouldn't be able to figure out that I'm actually a god. It's better if Potimas mistakenly considers our greatest fighting force to be the Demon King. I bet Kuro wouldn't take action what with one thing and another, so he doesn't count as a fighting

force.

Accordingly, the ones I selected were Natsume-kun and imouto-chan. Natsume-kun's gone berserk in various ways so I intend to use him and then throw him away, and imouto-chan will be made to control him. This way Natsume-kun will be the center of attention, and I'll avoid it. While at it, it would be good if the Demon King Army's movements could also be kept hidden.

So, Natsume-kun is the prince of the Empire. In which case, let's use that connection to the maximum, basically. The amount of troops that Natsume-kun can control with his own authority probably isn't much, so vampire girl will use her Charm to manipulate the Empire's higher-ups, and backup Natsume-kun. Natsume-kun himself has the highest rank skill of Charm from Lust as well, so at this stage let's go overtake the Empire from the inside. In that case, it should become much easier when the time comes for the Demon King Army to depart for the elf village.

Yup. Even if I do say so for myself, it's a wonderful plan eh. Just rather heretical. It's a bit too late for anything else though.

With supreme effort I explained all this to vampire girl and Felmina-chan. Phew, that was harder than defeating the Hero you know.

「Got it. Okay then, let's meet with this “imouto-chan” person.」

I dunno what's “okay then” though. Hey vampire girl, weren't you ever taught that when explaining something to someone you need to properly cover everything from A to Z? Use my feelings to make a guess? I'm not an esper you know, so of course I can't do that. Sheesh, the youth of today are hopeless at using sufficient words. Well, from here on they might be working together anyway, so if she wants to meet then I'll let her meet.

I take a look at imouto-chan's situation through a clone. Since her onii-san Yamada-kun suddenly started acting suspiciously in class and then left, she's quite restless. She's returned to her own room, but she's nervously pacing around the room. So you're worrying about your onii-chan that much huh. I see, I see.

Well then, let's raid imouto's dinner. We raid imouto-chan's room via teleport.

「!？」

Imouto-chan stiffens in shock when we suddenly appear. Vampire girl has fastened her eyes on imouto-chan. Felmina-chan, somehow seems to be looking at imouto-chan with eyes full of pity. Incomprehensible.

「Do you want to know what happened to your onii-san？」

In response to my question, imouto-chan gives a start of surprise. It's lovely that you're so easy to understand. Well then, shall we get started on making a deal with the devil, or rather, Evil God.

Translation notes:

“Secret manoeuvres restart” - this title is a reference to chapter 225, “Secret manoeuvres, secretly manoeuvring”.

“So you're worrying about your onii-chan that much huh” - Shiro specifically changes from “onii-san” to “onii-chan”, perhaps to channel a “dere-dere” feeling (into Sue).

“let's raid imouto's dinner” - possibly a reference to a TV program that roughly translates as “Raid! The neighbour's dinner”

“deal with the devil, or rather, Evil God” - just to be clear, Shiro has previously told Sue that she's an Evil God, so Shiro is taking the role of the “devil” in this deal.

Chapter 278 - How To Skillfully Trick A Brother-Con Imouto

Today, your onii-san was acting strange wasn't he? Do you want to know the reason? I'll tell you then. Amazingly enough, your onii-san was selected to be the Hero. The previous Hero was also your onii-san though, but I've killed him. Since Heros are a nuisance you know. Maybe I should erase him, hmm. What to do, hmm. Maybe if someone would cooperate with me then I wouldn't need to erase him though, huh. Hint hint.

The end. That was a digest version of the conversation with imouto-chan. Currently, due to the incident of Yamada-kun becoming the Hero, I was shocked to see that imouto-chan has gotten over-excited and has a nosebleed. So it wasn't a superstition that when you get over-excited you can get a nosebleed. From there it seemed like an "onii-sama talk" was about to begin, but Felmina-chan stopped it, so that problem was avoided. Nice going, Felmina-chan. Just what I'd expect of a former high-ranking noble. Her talking ability is way above mine.

Incidentally, when it was revealed that Yamada-kun had become the Hero, there was another squawking magpie who began to act up. Well, it's vampire girl after all. Come to think of it, I had forgotten to explain that bit. To silence her as quickly as possible, I kicked her flying. Like in a gag manga she sunk into the wall, so she should be quiet for a while. Seeing that, I get the feeling that all the colour drained from imouto-chan's face out of dread, but don't mind it. Afterwards, I also got the feeling that Felmina-chan laughed scornfully at her, but I'm sure that's just my imagination.

「What do you want me to do?」

So, the current situation is that imouto-chan is at a loss.

「It is a simple matter. If you want to save your onii-sama then just betray your country. If you are unable to do that, then you will lose not just your country, but your onii-sama's life, and also your own life. Which will you choose?」

Felmina-chan was rather lively as she drove imouto-chan into a corner. Looking at her like this she's basically a "noble girl villainess". She usually restrains herself, but Felmina-chan was originally an ojou-sama from a good house after all. I'm sure it's more in her nature to be giving orders than taking orders.

Imouto-chan is pondering all this with an expression of anguish. Sometimes she shows threatening signs, but she quickly suppresses it and stops. It seems that she knows that even if she tries to attack us she'll simply be beaten in return. Well, imouto-chan could never beat me no matter how she tried. For a non-reincarnator human she might be exceptionally strong, but I'm sure she wouldn't even match Felmina-chan anyway.

Imouto-chan pondered and pondered, and finally gave in. To be honest, I was surprised that she pondered this much. After all, she is a pathological brother-con after all. I had expected her to immediately reply with something like "if it's for onii-sama's sake then I'll do it!".

Based on the observations of the clones, this girl doesn't have any kind of patriotism. Instead, she might even hate the country. With the family environment she was raised in, she gets on quite badly with her mother and brothers, except Yamada-kun of course. Well, they're the queen and next king of this country though. Because of that, I hadn't really been expecting her to resist crushing the country.

Ah, I get it. If she cooperates with us, then that means she's opposing her beloved onii-sama huh. So that's why she pondered so much and is so depressed huh. Imouto-chan is hanging her head with a face like the world is about to end. Felmina-chan, and vampire girl who recovered before I noticed, are looking at imouto-chan's face and grinning. Why you.....

「In love with one another yet forced to be enemies.」

I whisper into imouto-chan's ear. Suddenly her shoulder makes a massive shudder.

「All the more reason for the forbidden love to ignite into passion.」

This time she twitches in response.

「When he finds out the truth, all his thoughts will be focused on you.」
「I'll do it!」

Easy. What's with this empty headed yandere brother-con? You wouldn't believe that a moment ago she had a face filled with despair, but now she has a sloppy smile with her mouth hanging open. This girl is broken - better do something soon. Actually, it's already too late. In order to keep her motivation going, next time I'll bring her some novels with the main character being a heroine who fell in love with her enemy. The type where in the end the two get together with a happy ending of course. Well, I don't think that'll be happening with imouto-chan and Yamada-kun though.

I've now secured imouto-chan who has developed a delusion of getting together with her nii-sama after overcoming a trial, so next we'll move to where Natsume-kun is. And off we go directly to where Natsume-kun is with teleport.

「Huh? What?」

When we teleported in, Natsume-kun was in the middle of brainwashing some elite surveillance people. I've been following his actions through my clones, and step by step he's been using brainwashing on the monitoring people to undermine them it seems. And, the ones in charge of the monitoring are from Ooshima-kun's house. Ooshima-kun's house is a dukedom in the kingdom. The duke and duchess have already been claimed by Potimas. What that means, is that Natsume-kun is already moving in a nice direction, without even me giving him instructions.

「Hm? You're... Wakaba huh?」

Even though the illusion should be concealing me, I was seen through in an instant. It seems that Kusama-kun saw through to my real face in an instant as well, so it seems that people who already knew my face aren't affected. Come to think of it, this is the first time that we've met while he's been in a relatively sane condition huh. Well, I'm about to make that remaining sanity "log out" though. To the clone inside Natsume-kun's head - do it.

「Ah-heigg?」

Natsume-kun makes a strange noise and his eyes roll back in his head.

「「「Woah」」」

The voices of vampire girl, Felmina-chan and imouto-chan overlap. It seems that they couldn't stand the fact that they had the same reaction, as vampire girl and Felmina-chan start glaring at each other. Don't squabble over something so trivial.

First of all, by way of the clone that has taken hold of Natsume-kun, I set up the suggestion that imouto-chan is an obedient cooperator. While at it, I induce him to take actions so as to overthrow this country. All done. Ah, I'll alter his memory of us to be supporters as well I guess.

When the falsification of Natsume-kun's memory is finished, his eyes roll back and while making odd sounds his body trembles and spasms then stops moving after one big leap. Finally, as if nothing had happened his expression returns to normal.

「Ahh, Shiro huh. What is it?」

Natsume-kun will now no longer recognise me as Wakaba Hiroyuki, and instead I'm established as Shiro. For no particular reason.

「Use these girls.」

I point at the girls standing behind me. Imouto-chan will be Natsume-kun's assistant, and vampire girl will take hold of the Empire from the inside. As for Felmina-chan, we'll return to the demon territories together for a job. With that as the general outline, for now I'll have imouto-chan take the role of Natsume-kun's advisor and reins-holder. With regards to the Empire, it'll take a bit of time until a message from Natsume-kun can get there, so it seems that vampire girl's debut will take a bit longer. That being the case, I leave imouto-chan in Natsume-kun's care and leave.

Chapter 279 - Dundun Dun Dundun

I was able to introduce imouto-chan and Natsume-kun to each other. As for what I can do next, that would be the analysis the body of Cyborg Potimas. I left vampire girl with Waldo-kun, and I'll have them capture the fort together. I'd already returned Felmina-chan to the demon territories, and set her to work on the arrangements for countermeasures.

Once I'd placed those two in their posts, I entered the other dimension where I'd left Potimas's body for storage. There I began to dismantle the Poti Body that was laid out. I feel like a doctor about to start an operation. "Scalpel!", as it were.

I don't need a scalpel though and carefully begin the dismantling using my hands. But, just what is this body? It was beyond my expectations for it to be a full-body cyborg though. My rough expectation was that it would use the elf's flesh body as a base, with various machine parts embedded here and there, but in fact it's all machine parts except for the brain and some critical organs. Hey, this is practically a Terminator.

Even for me, machines are outside my area of expertise, so I can't determine what the various functions are. Somehow or other, I can tell that this bit is life support, and these are motors and so on, but regarding the details such as the theory behind it's operation I have no idea.

However! That only applies to the machine parts. The workings of the magecraft-like features engraved into the machine parts is something that I do understand. Since I'm a god after all. If these were straightforward machines like what would be produced on Earth then I would have to study mechanical engineering from the basics, but for something produced by the elves to have no magecraft elements at all would feel like an absolute fraud you know. If this hadn't had any of that then I'd seriously cry.

While taking apart the machines, I analyse the magecraft carved into them. For now I will ignore the purely mechanical machine parts. I can't understand what I don't understand after all. Well, the completely mechanical parts with no

magecraft are not actually important anyway. At worst they could have nuclear weapons, right? ... Actually, maybe I shouldn't joke about that huh. W, well, maybe possibly probably it'll be okay. It doesn't have a small nuke installed for power, or so I hope.

I continue with the dismantling even more carefully than before. The disassembly is almost completed.

Hrm. The results of the analysis shows that this body does not have significant magecraft applied to it.

Firstly, there is magecraft applied to enhance the hardness of the entire body. In status value terms this would be a defensive ability boost. Likewise, there's magecraft to raise the maneuverability. In status value terms this would be offensive ability or speed. There's various other things built in as well, but they're only either there to assist the above two magecrafts, or things that are designed to be able to quickly activate simple offensive magecrafts. The only one which seems to have a high offensive ability is the one installed into the arm that wounded vampire girl which fired something like a laser beam, but it seems to be a combination of machine and magecraft so unfortunately I don't understand the details.

To put it plainly, the magecraft used within this body, is nothing more than an imitation of the magecraft used by the System to give status values to the inhabitants of this world as if it was natural. This isn't certain, but I think that this body operates outside of the System's assistance, and doesn't receive the benefits of the status values. That is why the exterior was specifically strengthened.

However, the degree of that strengthening is pretty decent. Putting aside the offensive ability, wouldn't the defensive ability reach something like 10,000 in status value terms? I myself don't receive the benefits of status values anymore, so this is nothing more than a guess though. It sure is inconvenient not being able to use Appraisal huh. Well, considering the time when it was able to contend with vampire girl in melee combat, it can be clearly seen that it has a considerable amount of combat ability though.

Even with that level of combat ability, it won't become a threat from my point

of view. If they have many of these, then it would probably be tough for vampire girl and oni-kun for instance, and for an ordinary soldier just to take them on one-on-one it would be pretty hopeless though. The Demon King or I would be entirely out of reach. If you wanted to defeat the Demon King with these, then it'd be impossible unless you prepared more than 10,000 of them. Against me, no matter how many there are, it'd be a completely pointlessly futile waste of time!

Ahem. However, that's only assuming that these are the elves' trump card. Considering the technological level of this body, from my perspective, it seems to be ancient. What served to kickstart my apotheosis, was the underground ruins from the old world. In comparison to the technology applied to the robot army I saw there, there's almost no difference in the technology level applied to this Poti Body.

Then the elves haven't developed beyond the technological level of the old world? No, I don't think that's the case. The proof of that, is that this Poti Body, was manufactured long ago. When I performed an analysis on the activated magecraft, the period of activation is easily more than 800 years. In other words, it means that this body has been in existence for at least 800 years. The brain might well have been replaced though, as it's practically the only living tissue within the body.

It's better to think of this as an old model body. I don't know the significance of it being used in this situation though, but it's not a recent model. It was probably considered that this old world body would be able to manage I guess. In practice, this would be quite a difficult opponent for anyone other than the Demon King. While vampire girl and oni-kun can beat it, I guess it's at the level where it's hard to say whether or not Mera could beat it. I'm sure that Kuro has subordinates who could beat it, but I'm not including them in my calculations.

Hmm. Conclusion: the elves might be bad news.

It's completely unknown how much they've progressed their technology since this body, but at the very least this is the absolute minimum. If I get serious then I don't think I could lose, but it might become a situation where I'm forced to consume more energy than expected. I want to avoid that as much as possible though. Just one more thing to worry about.

Translation notes:

“Dundun Dun Dundun” - This is referencing the Terminator theme.

Cyborg Poti, Poti Body - Shiro seems to be having trouble coming up with a nickname for this thing.

Chapter 280 - Aftermath Of The Battles

For the capture of the fort that I had left to Waldo-kun, once vampire girl participated it was finished off right away. Despite the humans who here holding it, vampire girl cleared the defensive wall unaided and invaded the interior. While creating a scene from hell, agonizing cries and all, the fort fell. Seriously okay, that's, you know, going a bit overboard perhaps? Not like I can say anything though. She seemed rather irritated about something.

The net result was, rather than a bloodless capture, a blood-drenched capturing of the fort was accomplished, and the 10th Army and the survivors of the 7th Army are currently occupying it. The decision is made to entrust it to the surviving commanding officers from the 7th Army, and the 10th Army are scheduled to return back before long. Though it's occupied it's not like there's many prisoners or anything due to a lack of survivors. While the chances of the humans coming to recapture the fort are not non-existent, they're probably in a mess as well anyway, so I'm sure they won't be moving soon. So, it's not necessary to leave many soldiers here. Beyond that, I want the 10th Army to be able to move freely, for the upcoming capture of the elf village.

The other armies are either withdrawing, or occupying the captured forts. The 2nd Army was supposed to have assaulted the fort themselves, but due to the boobian's scheme it's become covered with monkeys, so instead they're standing guard to prevent the monkeys from flooding into the demon territories. Well, with regards to it developing into standing guard, maybe the boobian has the ulterior motive of wanting to keep her forces close at hand perhaps? If they returned, although they would be uninjured, due to the need to supplement the other armies and so on they'd be pulled apart, and it may be unavoidable to perform a reorganisation anyway. Which is why, she didn't want to return. Maybe she's thinking of retaining her forces if possible, and opposing the Demon King or something.

The 3rd Army is currently occupying the fort it took. The idiot giant is overly kind, and despite it being a war he's providing good treatment to his enemies

who became prisoners. Because of that there's unnecessary additional effort involved, so I think they'll be unable to leave for a while.

The 4th Army is currently in the middle of retreating. Because they promptly withdrew from the battlefield, I'd say they'll probably be the first to return back to the demon territories. Well, Mera is commanding them, so I'm sure there's nothing to worry about.

The 5th Army is likewise in the middle of retreating. They've suffered more damage than the 4th Army, so at a town along the way they'll have to give treatment to the injured soldiers and resupply. Particularly because there's many injured soldiers, they might end up staying in that town for a long time but either way they probably won't be moving any time soon.

The 6th Army is also in the middle of retreating. They're in an even more pitiful state than the 5th Army. Their general the shota died in battle, and many of the soldiers have also been lost. Excluding the 1st Army which was completely annihilated, I guess they've suffered the most damage. Because it'll be almost impossible to reorganise them as an army, I think they'll probably be disbanded and distributed amongst the other armies. Well, similarly to the 5th Army, it'll probably take some time before they can return though.

The 8th Army are returning in triumph. Since they won after all. I think it would be incorrect to say that they are retreating. However, their mood is about as heavy as if they'd been defeated. Oni-kun demonstrated his brutality and the battlefield became hell after all. Battlefields are always hell, but his deeds thrust it down into the very bottom of hell. Scary, scary. The fort they were supposed to occupy was completely destroyed, so having no reason to stay they're making their return in triumph. Prisoners? You think there are any?

The 9th Army didn't leave in the first place, so omitted. Since that's a Demon King Army that's not a Demon King Army.

So in the end, the only one that can currently move freely is the Demon King's directly controlled army only. That Demon King's directly controlled army, is supposed to focus on defensive battles in the demon territory, so I guess they can't just move at a moment's notice after all. Well, to be blunt, just the Demon King by herself would suffice for defence so just by itself that suffices. If

necessary the puppet spiders and remaining Queen Taratekts could be summoned anyway.

There's no army that's ready for action. Well, if you think that means that there's nothing to do, that's not the case either. Dealing with the aftermath of the battles is a considerably important job after all.

To heal wounded soldiers, medicine or personnel who can use treatment magic need to be dispatched on-site. There's replenishment of the supply trains. The collective amount of damage and the number of surviving soldiers needs to be determined. From there a reorganisation plan needs to be prepared, otherwise it won't be possible to then move out to capture the elf village. There's quite a lot of work that is never-ending. For those I'll just delegate it all to Felmina-chan.

「Actually, please help me.」

Do you best! I have something that I need to do! I'm actually being serious here.

I want to get rid of as many elves and their collaborators as possible, since they've taken advantage of this opportunity to come out. The elves and those collaborators happen to be lurking in countries all over the world. You can tell just how wide their area of activity is, by considering the fact that they have a teleportation point created in the demon territories. Since they can use teleportation, it's no easy matter to exterminate them. Or actually, probably impossible. However, if I make use of this to try, then I should be able to constrain them somewhat. Well anyway, I'll be crushing the cyborg bodies that Potimas has put so much time and effort into.

When I include a requirement that any members we have here must be able to do that, then the number of potential members is limited. In that case, the other side should be cautious. Whether they withdraw to the elf village, or attack us in return, I should be able to expect some kind of action. If they withdraw to the elf village, then I'll locate the teleportation circle to the elf village that they've been desperately trying to conceal. If they go on the offensive, then I'll be able to make further analysis of the elves' combat potential. Either way, it can only be a positive outcome for us.

Hrm. While we're at it, I guess I'll raise vampire girl's level at the same time. By capturing the fort, vampire girl's level should have also risen by a fair amount, but I'm sure there's still plenty of room for progress.

「Therefore, let's go.」

「Like I've been saying! What do you mean by “therefore”!?!」

I grab vampire girl who was taking a break with Waldo-kun in the fort. We're now going to teleport around the world and raid the positions of the elves and their collaborators! Basically, a mini world tour.

Translation notes:

“Therefore, let's go” - if it's not obvious by now, Shiro has a tendency drop in on people (generally Sophia) and simply state the conclusion while also failing to explain all the thinking she put into that conclusion but speaking as if she had done so. She doesn't always use the exact same words so I'm not translating it in the exact same way each time.

The Elf Leader's Miscalculation

Author's note: Po-no-ji's point of view.

Translation note: This is referring to Potimas

The war between the humans and demons has come to an end. The result, is more or less a draw. Both sides suffered enormous damage.

Several of the forts that form the cornerstone of the human territorial borders were taken, and the situation has become one where it's unclear when the demons will invade again. Not just that, but while the forts being taken was bad enough, the damage to the humans wasn't limited to just that. The death of the Hero in particular, could be said to be the hardest blow for the humans. While I didn't have much expectations of this Hero, I won't deny that I did have some faint hopes that maybe he could achieve something. Him and Ariel killing each other would be too much to ask for, as that would be the sort of dream a child who cannot face reality would have.

While the demons were able to successfully capture several forts, both at the places where they failed and where they succeeded, naturally they did not come away unscathed. Purely in terms of the number of casualties, there probably wasn't much difference between them and the humans. So, from the perspective of the demons who have fewer numbers than the whole of humanity, the damage they took is great. Because they conscripted soldiers without considering the consequences, if they manage their losses poorly then it could even cast a shadow over the continued existence of the demons as a species. But then again, since she was well aware of that possibility, by pressing ahead with the unreasonable conscription of soldiers anyway, I guess you could say it's going as Ariel planned.

Yes, as planned. The war on this occasion has been entirely within the palm of Ariel's hands. That ability of hers to cause all this damage to the humans and demons, and eradicate the one person who needed to be dealt with. Maybe it would better to call it completely magnificent. Or perhaps even artistic. At any rate, even I was lead around by the nose after all.

Since before the war began, I sensed that it was becoming hard for the elves within the demon territory to carry out their activities. While I had thought that Argnar had been spotted as being one of our collaborators, I still feel ashamed of having our movements entirely understood and being one-sidedly crushed. It was a surprise in itself that Ariel would have someone under her capable of conducting such information warfare. I had looked down on Ariel's strength as purely being in her fighting ability.

Probably this Shiro or whatever individual, the one who has recently been serving beside her, is an expert in intelligence gathering. Although there is no reliable information due to all the interference, it seems there are rumours going around saying that the army that Shiro is commanding are specialised in such things. Where did she find a group with such skills? Because of them moving around behind the scenes, I've been at the limits of my irritation at not being able to shape events as I wish. The information warfare within the demon territories has been a complete loss. It's already impossible to tell what information is fact and what is fake.

For this reason, after Ariel had departed for the war, at the time when I gained some information that one of the reincarnators, the girl vampire, was alone, I suspected that it might well be a trap. Being cautious, I intended to crush the trap itself, and intentionally answered the invitation. Thinking of the worst case, I used an old model body that it wouldn't hurt to lose. Even though it was an old model, it was a body with plenty of combat ability.

It was crushed by that girl vampire with trivial ease. From the sensations I felt during the battle, I think that if she got serious she could be equivalent to a top ranking dragon, or perhaps her true power is even beyond that. Compared to the other reincarnators I know, her fighting strength is different by a whole order of magnitude. Clearly Ariel has trained her in the fundamentals of combat. Otherwise, I don't see how some mere girl could possess such combat ability.

Furthermore, that same mere girl has since been appearing frequently in places all across the world over the last few days, making raids on elf positions. That one mere girl, just by herself, has destroyed elf positions across the world, and whittled away the personnel. To think that it wasn't only elf positions in the

demon territories that was smashed, but even ones in the human territories - I can only describe it as a miscalculation. I don't even have the slightest idea how they were located.

The combat ability of that girl vampire, is not something that ordinary elves can handle. To kill that, there's probably no option except to deploy the anti-magic model Gloria. Or otherwise use the anti-god Gloria in the elf village. I certainly don't intend to use that on some mere girl though.

Besides, there's not just that girl vampire, but there's probably some other troublesome individuals around. The one who deduced the location of the elf positions. The one with a high level in Space Magic, based on the fact that they're teleporting instantly around the world. At least, there is someone with those two abilities. I expect that this girl called Shiro is involved, but I don't have any proof of that. The worst case scenario, would be that all those abilities are possessed by that girl vampire, but even though she is a reincarnator, it is hard to consider that a single person could have so many different abilities. Either way, even with what she has shown so far there's no mistaking that she is a nuisance.

I regret not being able to kill her as a baby. Also, seeing the possibilities that reincarnators have, I have confidence that my choice wasn't wrong. As I thought, reincarnators are the embodiment of possibilities. A strange existence that contradicts the common sense of this world. If I can have that, then I.....

If nothing else, this is surely a declaration of war from Ariel. If only she had kept quiet until her life span had ran out, she would have died an easy death. Does that mere girl seriously think she can beat me just because she's gotten somewhat strong due to the assistance of the System? How ludicrous. Both now and in the past, the only ones I fear are the gods. And there's now only one god left remaining on this planet. If I can finally get rid of Gyuriedistodiez, all that would be left is the practically dead Sariel.

If it comes to pass that Ariel invades the elf village, then she'll be exterminated. There's many anti-Gyuriedistodiez weapons that have been developed. It may be going somewhat overboard to use them against that mere girl, but I can consider it to be some breakin testing before the main event.

「Prepare a thorough inspection of every Gloria model. Make sure they're ready to be used at any time.」

「Yessir!」

Now then, be prepared to receive recompense for doing whatever you like outside.

Sorry bud, that whitey is a god, okay.

Translation notes:

“Po-no-ji” - written ポの字 this is a rather unusual way to turn Potimas's name into a nickname. Shortening someone's name to just one character (normally one kanji character for Japanese names) and adding の字 (letter of) is something you might see in an old style yakuza story. Though it seems this style has had some broader use in the internet age and ポの字 seems to have some reference to Pokemon, for example. Anyway, just think of it as the author being playful with Potimas's name.

“Girl vampire” - the term Shiro uses to refer to Sophia is 吸血っ子 (kyuuketsukko), short for 吸血鬼の子 (kyuuketsuki no ko), which is a bit like saying “vamp-girl” or “vamp-child”. While Potimas refers to her as 吸血鬼の娘 (kyuuketsuki no musume) which is more literally “vampire girl” or “vampire young lady”. To help distinguish the terms I used “girl vampire” instead for Potimas.

“Gloria” - this pretty much a direct phonetic translation. Whether there's any deeper meaning is hard to say. The “anti-magic model Gloria” is probably the type that Shiro faced just before her apotheosis.

The line at the end is from the author, lightly mocking Potimas.

Blood 34 - Not So Much War, As Terrorism

After several days of the mass murder tour together with goshujin-sama, it was finally over. I'm worn out. All I want to do right now is sleep. During the tour I wasn't able to sleep even once in the end.

I was suddenly taken away without the least explanation, spending every day conducting raids on the positions of some organisation from somewhere, just doing what I was told. At first I didn't even know what kind of organisation it was - not even that. Well, I don't know what that says about me who would just readily raid places as told without any explanation though. Part-way through I found out that it was an organisation of elves and their collaborators, after which I became more proactive about it.

However, despite not having explained such a fundamental point she gave me all these detailed instructions when on-site, giving me dos and don'ts. Like, at this position kill everyone without letting a single one escape. Or like, just let this one person escape. Or like, don't let any unrelated humans witness it. For all that, all goshujin-sama did was deliver me on-site, and apart from that she didn't even lift a finger to help. My status values might have risen but I'm too worn out to care.

I'm sure that she wouldn't have explained even if I'd asked anyway, but I'm sure there was some reason behind those detailed instructions as well. Since this is goshujin-sama we're talking about, I'm sure the reason would be something inconceivable to me but I wish she would explain things a bit more. Like, desperately.

While it feels like we went to all sorts of places, it's not like I was able to do some leisurely sightseeing or anything. We arrived by teleportation, then went to a restaurant, then made a raid on the elf position. That was all each time. When one place was done we immediately teleported to the next place. Despite having the chance to come to some unfamiliar lands, why is it that the only sightseeing-like activity was food? I also find it dubious that having food every time was the only thing she wouldn't miss out on.

Thanks to that I got stuck with having to accompany her despite my stomach being full. I wonder how many times I've eaten in a single day? I gained some skill called Overeating anyway. Maybe it's just my imagination but the girth of my stomach is a bit..... Let's cut down on the size of my meals for a while.

While thinking such things, I headed for my private room at the Demon King's Castle. After I graduated from the academy, I was granted a private room within the Demon King's Castle. I somehow feel like my place of refuge has been taken from me. While heading down a corridor towards that private room, I unexpectedly met Felmina.

「Oh my?」

Well, putting aside meeting with her, I wonder if she's okay? It seems like there's heavy shadows under her eyes at least, and her skin tone is obviously pale you know. Her back is still straight though, so I wonder if that's her dignity as an ex-noble. While her physical condition is obviously poor, I wonder if I should admire her resolute manner despite her being an enemy, or something?

「Hey, are you okay?」

「That is no concern of yours.」

Here I am taking this rare chance to show concern for her, and she flatly refused me. However, somehow there was a lack of bite in her tone you know.

「Instead of acting tough, why not get some rest?」

「I will rest when I can. Unlike a certain someone, I shall not do something so irresponsible like disappearing during such a hectic time.」

That “certain someone”, is perhaps referring to goshujin-sama? Or instead, does she mean me?

「Is that, about goshujin-sama? Or me instead?」

「Both of you.」

She declared that with a resentful tone. Well, of course. The general who should be dealing with the aftermath of the war vanished after all. That responsibility was then entirely shifted onto Felmina.

「Where have you been until now?」

「Goshujin-sama took me out, to various places.」

I'm not particularly trying to dodge the issue, as she really did take me out to all sorts of places, not that I have any idea where those places were though. Perhaps Felmina also sensed that I was at a loss, since she didn't probe deeply.

「Since you have returned, that means goshujin-sama has also returned, right?」

「Yes. She should have.」

「Very well. If you happen to catch sight of goshujin-sama, please tell her to come to the office immediately.」

After breathing a deep sigh, a truly deep sigh, Felmina began to walk off. Seeing her back, I unconsciously called out to her.

「Shall I help?」

Though I said it, I surprised myself. Even though I might be about to collapse, I never expected that I would actually offer to help this girl on my own accord. I guess I'm just that worn out myself. I'm undoubtedly so worn out that I'm unable to make normal decisions huh. That's right, that's got to be it.

「Are you quite sane?」

See. Even Felmina is doubting my sanity now.

「Oh my? There I was speaking in good faith you know. You're so cruel.」

「I am shocked that you even have the concept of good will.」

She really is cruel. Did she have to put it like that?

「Either way, I am fine. I have absolutely no need for the help of someone entirely lacking in competence, with the exception of fighting or being fawned over by men.」

She really, really is cruel! As I thought, I definitely hate her.

「Okay, fine. Then, do your best to overwork yourself to death.」

If we continue this conversation any further it'll just make us both feel worse anyway, so I'll take my leave already. I somehow feel that I'm excessively worn out.

The next day, I heard that Felmina really had collapsed from overwork, but it's not my fault okay. Goshujin-sama is at fault for pushing all the work onto her. It

seems that goshujin-sama had to take over from the collapsed Felmina and worked while crying like a baby, but, you reap what you sow you know.

Oni 18 - A Sea Of Corpses

I hadn't expected the aftermath of the battle to be so bad. The basic work is over, and I'm dead tired. I guess it's due to my status values and skills, but physically the fatigue is not too bad. However, my mental fatigue is staggering.

This is because the work that I am doing, is to verify the list of the war dead and to prepare compensation for the bereaved families. The 8th Army that I command, has a considerable number of casualties. More than half of those who died was because I forcibly set them up to attack the enemy army, turning them into a semi-suicide attack. Every time I look at the list of names, it seems like I can hear voices of their bitter resentment towards me.

Additionally, there's the scenes of the bereaved families clinging to the recovered corpses. To them, I have to speak words of condolences that I don't feel in my heart. I cannot put my heart into it. I don't have the right to do so. I drove them to near certain death, so I have to be the cruel commander. By all rights, it should be unforgivable for me to immersed in sentimentality like this.

So that I won't think about such things, I determinedly set about completing the work in the aftermath of the battle. The fort at the battlefield was destroyed by my own hands, and because of that there was no longer any strategic value in occupying it. There's no use in occupying what is now just a pile of rubble. However, the corpses of the casualties from both armies left behind after the battle and the goods and materials inside the fort had to be collected. If they'd been neglected then battlefield looters would have carried it all off. At the time when I had crushed the fort most of those goods and materials were rendered useless, but fortunately there were some stored items that avoided the collapse and were undamaged, so those could be collected.

What was worse than anything, was the retrieval of the corpses. The ones in charge of retrieving the corpses were naturally the survivors of the 8th Army and the recently hired personnel. Most of them were acquaintances with the deceased. There were many occasions when, upon discovering the corpse of an acquaintance, they would stop work and start crying aloud in grief.

Such scenes, were the result of my actions. I was almost lost for words. Nevertheless, I could not simply keep silent.

I heartlessly told the bawling laborers, “stop crying and get working”. Towards those who looked towards me in resentment, I glared back even stronger. Overpowered by that glare, they could only hide their faces in submission.

The members of the 8th Army, are a miss-mash group who never had any kind of relationship with me. From the very beginning, they never had any loyalty towards me at all. Then, after I drove them towards almost certain death and they lost many comrades in arms, that turned into hostility and fear. Into hatred at the irrational deaths. However, they couldn’t oppose me. They were keenly aware of that gloomy conclusion.

Currently, I am the evil general who rules his subordinates with dread. The mere concept of righteousness doesn’t even exist. However, this is the path that I chose. There is no way that I can turn back now.

With a heavy sigh, I get up from the chair in my private room. At this time today, there is a conference of the assembled commanders.

I leave my room, and head towards the conference room. Along the way, I unexpectedly happened to come across Merazofis-san.

「Greetings.」

「Greetings.」

We both exchange a short greeting. Merazofis-san is an attendant of Sophia-san. In addition to that, since I became an army commander, he helped me out with various things as the more senior army commander. He might be a calm person who doesn’t make idle talk, but his mood seems unusually heavy. Most likely he is in a depressed mood for similar reasons to me. His usually pale complexion, looks to be particularly pallid today.

Without pause, we both proceed to the conference room in silence. On opening the door to the conference room and entering, already seated there in a similarly heavy mood is Commander Darado. However, he looks to be markedly more physically fatigued than mentally fatigued. Unlike Merazofis-san and I, Commander Darado is a normal demon. His status values are likewise low. Most likely, on top of the fatigue built up during the war, the aftermath of

the battle has piled on even more fatigue.

「Hrm. Merazofis-dono and Wrath-dono huh.」

His voice also lacks his normal vigor. It seems he is considerably fatigued.

「Thanks for all your efforts.」

I unconsciously said that.

「Hrm-m. I presume I look fatigued then?」

「Indeed, considerably so.」

There was no need to deceive him, so I spoke my honest impressions.

「I am very much ashamed. I was defeated during what should have been my chance to shine, my shame exposed during the aftermath. My confidence has been shattered from everything.」

Commander Darado makes a feeble smile. Then, with convenient timing, Commander Kogou enters the room. The giant commander, perhaps sensing the mood inside the room, takes a seat while making suspicious nervous actions. Commander Kogou looks unwell. I guess that he's more or less exhausted from hard work.

I also take my own seat and wait for the conference to start. After waiting a short while, Shiro-san entered the room. It might just be my imagination, but when she entered the room it seemed like she looked at Commander Kogou. Shiro-san's eyes are closed, so it's hard to tell what she's looking at though.

「Hiya. I guess you're all here huh.」

While my eyes were caught by Shiro-san, Ariel-san had entered the room before I noticed. Not all the commanders are present, so probably the remainder are absent. Apart from that, Balto-san who is standing next to Ariel-san has a terrible looking expression. He looks so deathly pale that he might die at any time - is he going to be okay?

「Everyone, thanks for all your hard work dealing with the aftermath of the war. So, I feel bad for saying this when you're so tired, but I still have much more work for you all okay. In preparation for the next battle, I want to hasten the reorganisation of the army.」

Nobody showed it on their faces, but I'm sure we all had the same thought:
"Give us a break!"

Now on sale - Demon King black canned coffee!

Translation notes:

The comment at the end is a wry comment from the author. Probably.

Chapter 281 - Shall I Tear Them Off?

Once the conference was over, the completely exhausted army commanders sluggishly left the room. The only one in high spirits was the Demon King. Since even oni-kun has the look of fatigue on his face, it must be substantial huh. I mean, is Balto going to be okay, like that? His face has the shadow of death on it though.

During the conference, though each army will be hastily unified it was decided that the armies already with sufficient numbers would be consolidated. During this meeting Kuro and boobian didn't participate, but since their armies didn't receive any damage in the first place they weren't called because there was no need to reorganise their armies. Or rather, since the boobian has made camp near the fort under the pretext of monitoring the monkeys that she herself instigated, they're not going anywhere soon anyway. Maybe she would have refused to budge unless she was compelled to come to the conference.

The details of the reorganisation are: the survivors of the 6th Army that was lead by the shota will be merged into the 5th Army. The 7th Army that was lead by the hoodlum will be merged into the 3rd Army. Mera's 4th Army and oni-kun's 8th Army will be left as is. That sort of thing.

Mera's army and oni-kun's army will also be taken along when the time comes to capture the elf village. While it could be arranged for them to move together, rather than hastily reorganising them, it seems that it was determined that it would be better to let them each do their own thing. Since the plan is for the 5th Army that the mock-samurai leads will remain to defend the demon territories, their numbers will be replenished. Likewise, since the 3rd Army that the idiot giant leads will also be defending, it was readily decided to augment their numbers. Though there will certainly be some minor adjustments, that's the general idea.

So in short, the armies that will participate in the raid on the elf village won't reorganise. The defence side will be reorganised and their forces replenished.

Normally you'd do it the other way around I'd think, but to be blunt the

soldiers are merely there to make up the numbers, and so long as their bosses are there it doesn't matter either way. The only ones truly considered to be a meaningful force, are Mera and oni-kun alone. The rest are basically disposable pawns who wouldn't be missed if they died. The gulf in status sure is cruel eh.

Now then, I'm sure that the other armies are about to get busy with drawing up lists etc for the changes in personnel, but my 10th Army can carry on without any changes, so I'll have some free time. Felmina-chan has already recovered, so it's fine to leave the administration to her. Which is why I'm going to go out for a bit.

I rouse vampire girl, who's been living in idleness, from her bed and forcibly haul her along.

「Ah. It's this again huh. I'm being abducted without any explanation again huh.」

It somehow seemed like vampire girl was being strangely philosophical, but ignore it, ignore it. I teleport while still holding onto vampire girl. At the point where I teleport to, there's a monkey right in front of us.

「Eh?」

Vampire girl is likewise directly facing the monkey.

「Exterminate every last one of them okay.」

「Eh?」

I teleport right away, leaving vampire girl behind. It somehow feels like I heard a shout of "Hey-y!?", but I'm sure it's just my imagination.

The monkeys occupying the fort were starting to become a nuisance, so I decided to have them cleaned up. No big deal, whether there's 10,000 or 100,000 monkeys, vampire girl will win easy-peasy. Anyhow, once she's killed one the rest will come at her of their own accord anyway, so there's no way they'll get away. She won't be able to escape either though.

I had intended to deal with the monkeys in due course, but the reason why I chose to do it with this particular timing is because the boobian of the 2nd Army has been seen making suspicious moves. Or rather, she's totally been in contact with those fucking elves. Who'd have thought that immediately after

their positions all around the world had been crushed that they would attempt to get in contact with the leaders of the demon armies. Furthermore, that boobian willingly jumped on board as well. It seems that all the nutrients have gone to her breasts after all, leaving her head empty. Given the same proposition, the idiot giant reserved judgement so it seems that he still has something inside his head. I'm sorry I called you an idiot. Although, he's still an idiot for not rejecting it immediately.

The ones the elves attempted contact with were the boobian of the 2nd Army and the idiot giant of the 3rd Army. "At this rate you will ground down by the Demon King, you know? Why don't you cooperate with the elves and make a surprise attack on the Demon King, hmm?" Given that proposition, the boobian unhesitatingly assented. What a fool. The idiot giant chose to reserve judgement after much hesitation. However, based on his manner he was certainly considerably tempted. Most likely, once he's induced by the boobian he'll join for certain. What an idiot.

「What's the situation?」

「Reporting. The anogratch inside the fort have suddenly started making an uproar. Currently there is no indication that they will leave the fort though. We do not know what is occurring.」

The boobian receives a report from a soldier who was standing guard on the fort. I'm soundlessly standing next to her.

「There is nothing to fear.」

「Yeek!?!」

Maybe it's because I suddenly called out to them, as the boobian and the soldier who came to report both raise their voices in surprise. I'd rather you not make that reaction like you'd seen a ghost.

「The forces of the 10th Army are working to liberate the fortress.」

「Say what?」

The boobian asks me to repeat myself in a tone of disbelief. However, I have no intention of repeating the same explanation.

「Until the work is complete I suggest that you wait here.」

Saying so, I retrieve a chair from another dimension and make myself at home. In addition I take out a table, and place some snacks and drinks on top. From the fort in the distance, the sounds of a violent battle reverberate. Do your best vampire girl. While I observe you doing your best I'll treat myself to an elegant tea break. Ah, that reminds me.

「As soon as the extermination is complete, the 2nd Army will occupy the fort. It's going to get busy here I'm sure.」

I whisper that to the boobian, who is still in a daze. Once the army occupies the fort, they won't be able to abandon that duty. It's possible that the humans will come to regain it, meaning that their forces must be kept there. Which means, that they can't do something like cooperate with the elves and march to the demon territory. They won't have any spare time to do so.

Now then. The current situation is that the trusted retainer of the Demon King is defenselessly exposing herself right now, but will the boobian make a move on her I wonder? I wouldn't expect her to be that much of a fool, but I've laid out this trap just in case. If she goes for it then the head of the 2nd Army will be significantly altered. I'll tear off those boobs before her head though.

Chest girth rankings:

1st place: Mother (Queen Taratekt)

That chest girth, is a prodigious threat. It's not something that any human can beat! Flee, run away!

2nd place: Clevea (Shun's maid)

Not so much her breasts, as muscle.

3rd place: Sanatoria

She's not called boobian for nothing. They might get torn off though.

Reverse rankings:

3rd place: Sue

“Ugh!”

2nd place: Demon King

As a loli-babaa, there was no other alternative.

1st place: Sensei

“It’s only because my growth rate is slow! I have hopes for the future!”

Yet, the elves have the standard pattern of having small breasts.

Translation notes:

“the armies that will participate in the raid on the elf village” - the word used here for “raid” is gamer slang. Potimas is a “raid boss” now?

“That chest girth, is a prodigious threat” - untranslatable pun, as the words used for “chest girth”, “prodigious” and “threat” all have the same pronunciation.

For the “chest girth” rankings, some of the comments below the entries are more like reactions from the person being referred to, so for clarity I’ve put these lines in quotes. Clevea first appeared in S3, and “loli-babaa” roughly means “lolita old hag” (ie looks like a little girl but is actually really old).

Chapter 282 - I'll Tear Them Off

In the end, the boobian didn't attempt to make a move on me before vampire girl finished exterminating the monkeys. It seems that even she could sense that it wouldn't be a smart move to start a fight with a close associate of the Demon King with such timing. Going one step beyond that, given that the 10th Army are rumoured to be a force specialising in intelligence, it would be good if she understood the significance of their commander coming alone to visit her, but I wonder. It should be implicitly saying "what you're up to is being leaked" though. Well, I don't know whether or not she understood to that extent, but maybe I should get her to send out some monkey extermination reinforcements? I almost asked that, but it seems she intends to behave for now. Incidentally, I gave up on the reinforcements. After all, if the reinforcements are done badly then they'd just suffer damage anyway. Vampire girl would gain less experience as well.

Once vampire girl has finished the monkey extermination, I'll inform boobian of that and leave the cleaning up of the fort to her. The fort is becoming full of monkey corpses anyway. Cleaning that up will be a major pain. If it was me I'd be able to toss them all into another dimension though, but after I weighed up the options of gaining some food versus forcing some work onto the 2nd Army, I decided to give up on the food and have the 2nd Army work hard. After this the members of the 2nd Army will be required to work hard on tidying up the corpses of the monkeys, clean up the fort and then occupy it. Work is on the increase! Yet, it's with the pattern that a bonus won't be paid.

I teleport ahead to the fort, collecting vampire girl who has been covered in monkey blood. It somehow seems that her eyes have become like that of a dead fish, but I'm sure she's okay. First of all, I tossed her into the baths at the Demon King's Castle. I've got my own cleaning up to do huh.

「And that's what happened.」

「Okay. I had wanted you to report such things properly though.」

It's been several days since the vampire girl enabled monkey extermination

operation was carried out. I received a summons from the Demon King for some reason, and an explanation was demanded for the monkey extermination operation.

「Say, Shiro-chan. Just when did this happen again?」

「A little while ago.」

「It was a long while ago! Why did you keep quiet about that!? Put yourself in my place - I suddenly received a report of the results of an order I don't remember giving! Consider my feelings of having to keep a poker face while saying "sorry for the trouble" over something I have no clue about!」

「Did you actually say "sorry for the trouble"?」

「I didn't actually.」

It seems that the boobian came to the castle to report to the Demon King about the monkey extermination battle and what happened after that. It seems she decided that since the monkeys are gone, that she couldn't keep using the excuse of "I'm stuck with doing this so I can't come to report" forever. It appears that they've mostly finished incinerating the corpses of the monkeys, and that the fort has just about recovered enough to be habitable.

「So? Shiro-chan, from your point of view, what's the likelihood of that woman resorting to violence?」

「If she believes that she doesn't have a good chance of winning then she won't move to action. Even without that, if we can keep putting pressure onto her, then I think she'll put it off with the excuse that the time isn't right yet.」

That boobian is a piddling and extreme coward. She won't fight without a good chance of winning, and because she's a coward she will slink back and stop taking action with just a mere hint that she's being monitored. To be blunt, it's enough to only take half-measures against her. In practice, just by making inspection-like quick visits on her, she's become unable to sleep day or night. She's just too gutless.

「Umm, well if a big gun who is capable of killing the Hero keeps teleporting in for surprise inspections day and night, then of course she couldn't get any sleep.」

Yeah, but if I specified the times in advance then it wouldn't be a surprise

would it. If I teleport then she's not able to destroy any suspicious evidence from before I moved either. Well, everything's being leaked via my clones beforehand anyway though.

Currently the boobian isn't making any particularly suspicious moves, apart from some light contact with the elves. Or rather, it would be more correct to say that she doesn't have any spare time to do so. To be more precise, you could say I'd been wasting all her spare time as well though.

「Sigh. Well, whatever. For now, the next time you do anything report it properly. “Reporting, communicating and consulting” is important. Got it?」

The Demon King emphasises the last part a bit, so I have no choice but to nod my head. Dammit. The NEET is acting like a company president. Spouting shit like a proper member of society and all.

「Okay, next is some good news! Shiro-chan, that special something is due to arrive today.」

The Demon King makes a rotten muhaha laugh. That special something is perhaps!?

「Yo, you don't mean!?」

「I mean exactly that. The finest kurikuta set!」

「Oooohh!」

I clap my hands for no particular reason. The finest kurikuta set, is the sweets that I had requested from the Demon King. The kurikuta is a comparatively commonplace fruit. However, unlike common kurikuta, the finest kurikuta is the king amongst kurikuta, a specially selected variety with a chosen environment and fertiliser. Because of that it's a high-class item with limited production output, to the extent that even the Demon King can't easily get hold of them.

「This ain't the time to be hanging around! Let's go!」

「Aye! I'll follow you anywhere, anego!」

After the Demon King rushed out from the room in a somewhat incomprehensible mood, I chased after her in a similarly strange mood. The place that we're heading for is the delivery entrance for goods. On arriving in high spirits, it appears that Balto is fortunately here already, processing the

confirmation of the imported goods.

「Oh-ho? If it isn't Balto. What's up?」

The Demon King cheerfully addresses Balto. On the moment when he turns around to face her, I don't fail to notice that a flash of tension runs through Balto's body. Rather than it being because he's guiltily trying to conceal something, I believe it's because he's genuinely afraid of the Demon King.

「Hey there. You sure are labouring hard eh. Keep up the good work.」

「If you think so then please lend a hand.」

「But I refuse.」

The Demon King laughs mockingly at the worn out looking Balto. Thinking that it wouldn't be right to waste any more of Balto's precious time with pointless chatter, I pull on the Demon King's sleeve to prompt her to get down to business. It's all because I'm worried about Balto's welfare, and absolutely not because I want to quickly get hold of the finest kurikuta. Definitely not, okay?

「Oh, that's right. Balto, was the package delivered?」

「A package? If you are referring to the imported goods then that was completed just now though.」

「Ooh! Shiro-chan, this ain't the time to be hanging around! Balto, among those was a package for me, yeah?」

「Eh?」

「Eh?」

Hm? Somehow, I got a bad feeling.

「Incidentally, what are the contents?」

「The finest kurikuta set.」

「Ah.」

Towards the Demon King's inquiry, Balto makes an uncharacteristically dumb-sounding raised voice. It appears that he happens to know something.

「Ahh? It was there, right? So, where is it now?」

In response to the Demon King's cross-examination, the poker face that Balto normally keeps up turns into an uneasy expression. Is it just me who has somehow gotten a horrible premonition?

「Erm, I passed them on to Sanatoria.」

「Why!?!」

「I apologise. Since Sanatoria has always enjoyed eating kurikuta fruit, I mistook them for being hers.」

「Say..... what.....?」

The instant I heard that, I broke into a run. Also leaving the Demon King behind, I charged towards my destination. I know where she is. Actually, she's in a nearby room. Arriving at my destination almost instantaneously, I kick down the door to the room.

「Eh!? What!?!」

On kicking down the door the first thing that I catch sight of... is an empty plate. With my keen sense of smell, I catch the faint sweet fragrance still remaining. Secondly, there is an empty box that apparently had contained something.

「Ah, ahh.....」

I... just... can't... believe... it...

「Uhhnn...」

「Shiro-chan-n!?!」

It was just so much of a shock, that I lost consciousness.

Translation notes:

Hopefully it's reasonably obvious but the part with Balto onwards is from the much earlier B2 chapter from Balto's point of view.

“Reporting, communicating and consulting” (報・連・相) - a term from Japanese business practice.

“I'll follow you anywhere, anego!” - this is said in an archaic accent. “Anego” is an old term for “elder sister” and most frequently comes up in yazuka type stories. In such scenarios it doesn't refer to a blood relative but a woman who is higher up in the (mafia) “family”, or in general a woman that the speaker has respect for. Ariel's previous line was also said in an unusual way - she used an

unusually masculine tone. This playing with speech styles is what Shiro is referring to afterwards by “mood”.

“Keep up the good work” - this is said in a very easygoing manner.

“But I refuse” - a set phrase, but probably a JoJo reference as well.

“Uhhnn...” - this is basically Shiro making a soft breathing sound as she faints.

A Flat Chest Is A Status Symbol!

Author's note: Demon King's point of view. This chapter and the previous chapter will make more sense if you read them after reading B2 Maou-sama is dismayed.

I evacuate while carrying the unconscious Shiro-chan over my shoulder. It's not in the sense that I'm evacuating Shiro-chan herself, but in the sense that I'm evacuating Shiro-chan from that woman commander of the 2nd Army. Once Shiro-chan regains her consciousness, she might impulsively kill on sight. Grudges over food are dreadful!

Somehow or other I manage to return to the office before Shiro-chan regains her consciousness. Phew. That was a close shave. If Shiro-chan had thrown a tantrum, it would have resulted in the deaths of three of demon leaders in the worst case. I don't care about the commanders of the 2nd and 3rd Armies, but it would be bad if Balto died.

The 2nd Army commander and the 3rd Army commander have some kind of relationship with the elves, and appear to have been having a discussion on starting a coup d'état. They're also inviting Balto.

How careless. They're in the home territory of their enemy, yet they're actually speaking so openly. They're underestimating me way too much.

Within the Demon King's Castle, my threads have been laid out thoroughly. Through those threads, I am able to pick up sounds from every location in the Demon King's Castle. Both when the 2nd Army commander invited Balto, and when they disclosed the plan to kill me, that was clearly audible to me.

「I heard it, I heard it all. Those elves eh. They're getting rather annoying.」

Thanks to Shiro-chan assertively crushing them, the elves are in the process of losing their foundation for doing whatever they like in the outside world. However, they're still the same eyesore that they've always been. If a group amongst the demons are showing signs of unrest, then they're probably thinking that they gotta move their plan along quickly huh.

While thinking that, the door reverberates from a knock.

「Go ahead.」

「Excuse me.」

The one who opened the door was Balto, just as I had thought. After refusing the invitation from the 2nd Army commander, it seems that he came here immediately.

「Hmm? Did you need something?」

Though I can pretty much guess what he wants to say, I purposefully make that inquiry. After blinking his eyes several times in hesitation, he resolves himself and opens his mouth to speak.

「I have come to plead for clemency.」

A side of my mouth curls up. From Balto's point of view, it undoubtedly looks like a cruel smile I'm sure.

「What might you be referring to, hmm? Ahh! You mean making a mistake with the kurikuta and handing them over to the 2nd Army commander? If that's the case then could you say that to Shiro-chan instead of me perhaps? Those were something that I had requested for Shiro-chan after all.」

Although I know what Balto wants to say, I purposefully dodge the subject.

「Grudges over food can be dreadful you know. Unless you make a wholehearted apology she might not forgive you, okay? Like seriously, for real.」

Though I said it jokingly, part of what I said is no joke at all. If Shiro-chan's rage is left unchecked then she's capable of anything.

「Maou-sama.」

「Hmm?」

「Maou-sama, I beg you.」

Balto barely speaks, and simply bows his head. Balto understands. He knows I heard that conversation just now. Even so, he's pleading for the 2nd Army commander. The reason why he's not speaking plainly, is probably because he told her that "I'll pretend I never heard it", so he's trying to stay faithful to his own words.

「Balto. We are going to attack the elf village next.」

In deference to Balto's sincere manner of desperately trying to protect his childhood friend, I reveal the next battlefield. Until now, with the exception of some on Shiro-chan's side knowing, the next target to attack has been kept secret. When Balto hears it, his eyes open wide.

「I shall also pretend that I never heard it, this time. If I have a request, it's to hold them back. If you're unable to hold them back, then I won't waste my breath arguing and simply crush them. 」

「.....Understood.」

「Mm. Withdraw.」

「Excuse me.」

Balto made a deep bow, then left the room. If the 2nd Army and 3rd Army still act rashly after this, then there's no helping it.

「I'll tear them off.」

I heard something odd being muttered. Damn, I forgot.

I quickly turned around, and there rising up like a wraith was Shiro-chan. Oh crap. She's thirsting for blood, yup.

「Shiro-chan! STOP! STOP!」

As Shiro-chan is about to stagger out from the room I cling to her waist, stopping her movement. Just a moment ago I had told Balto that I would be turning a blind eye, yet at this rate Shiro-chan is totally gonna do him in!

「Let go! Let go of me! I'm gonna tear off those heavily laden boobs! I'm gonna eat them instead of the kurikuta!」

Shiro-chan is deranged!

「Shiro-chan! They won't taste sweet, okay! They won't taste delicious, okay! I'll prepare something sweet and delicious another time, okay!」

「Those detestable boobs! That damn boobian!」

Shiro-chan struggles violently. A girl shouldn't be going "boobs boobs"! Or rather.....

「Shiro-chan, you have a nice pair of boobs yourself, right?」

On top of not being able to tell with a glance due to the flat clothes she wears, because she's the type to look slender in clothing they're not conspicuous, but Shiro-chan's are actually quite big, right? In my opinion, while they might fall behind the 2nd Army commander's, they should still easily exceed the average though, right? In the first place, since my body stopped growing before I reached adulthood, I've pretty much got nothing here you know.

「If you want to tear off some so badly, then why don't you just tear off your own then eh?」

I put more strength into my arms wrapped around Shiro-chan's waist, squeezing tightly.

「Yeah? Or if not then would it be okay if I tear off yours perhaps?」

I should have the right to do that, shouldn't I. Big ones are the enemy. In short, Shiro-chan is my worthy enemy. Shiro-chan doesn't have the right to make a fuss on this matter!

「Umm, well, somehow there is this voice inside me crying out that those bigger than mine are the enemy though.」

Shiro-chan breaks out into a cold sweat.

「Yup. That's right. Those bigger than mine are the enemy, right. In that case Shiro-chan, are you okay with being my enemy then?」

「NO-O-O!!!」

I switch from grabbing her waist to grabbing her chest, and grasp with all my might. I feel that I have crushed something soft. Evil destroyed.

The secret boob situation

Because of D, there are many reincarnators whose appearance was adjusted to be beautiful, but the breast sizes were adjusted so that they'd likely be less than D's. Why, you ask? Because it wouldn't be interesting for her if they grew up to be bigger than D's own. Consequently, with Shiro having an almost identical appearance to D, there are few reincarnators with even bigger breasts than hers. The two who would win against Shiro are Sophia and, by a narrow margin, Katia. Since they were only adjusted to likely develop smaller, the

environment they grew up in and their nutritional balance could allow them to overcome that. In Sophia's case, since she's an airhead perhaps all the nutrition went to her chest? (Not necessarily) In Katia's case, because she was originally male perhaps her female hormones over-compensated as a side-effect? (Not necessarily).

Translation notes:

"I heard it, I heard it all. Those elves eh. They're getting rather annoying" - this line is right from the end of B2, though it was unclear until now who said it.

"She's thirsting for blood" - a slightly liberal translation here. A more literal translation would be something like "She's intending to do him/them in" ("do in" as in "murder").

The word used for "tear off" can also be used when referring to picking fruit (such as kurikuta). In particular, when Shiro says "I'm gonna tear off those heavily laden boobs" it's very much like she's referring to them as if they were fruit.

Just to be clear, Shiro (and D) are in the "kyonyuu" (big breast) category. Amongst the reincarnators only Sophia and Katia are bigger, though Katia is only slightly bigger.

Chapter 283 - They Were Torn Off

Incomprehensible. Though I was going to be the one doing the tearing off, why was mine torn off instead? It's strange. I feel like I've caught a glimpse of a mystery of the world. Therefore, please contain your anger, I'm seriously begging you, Demon King-sama.

It's that. Talking about breasts in front of the Demon King is taboo. Probably height as well. Since she's small. Speaking of this amounts to risking one's life, no doubt. I'm too afraid to speak about it.

Well, whether they're torn off of whatever, they can be restored easily enough, but the Demon King's eyes at that time gave me this unfathomable fear. That expression in her eyes somehow feels like something that could come from the pages of a horror manga. Dangerous, dangerous. Those eyes belong to someone who has already killed people. Ah, I'm sure the Demon King had the Human Slaughterer title or similar. For her, killing is normal.

Dammit. I was told by the Demon King not to take revenge upon the boobian, so just how can I vent this rage which has nowhere to go?

「Eeek!？」

Sacrifice located. Today's sacrifice is the well-known vampire girl-san. Let's inquire about her current state of mind.

「No monkeys! I don't want anything to do with monkeys again!」

While screaming about monkeys the moment she saw my face, vampire girl attempts to flee. How damn rude. Don't think that you can escape from me, okay?

I immediately catch hold of vampire girl as she tries to flee. I seize her by the scruff of the neck, preventing her escape. As she still tries to move her feet despite that, vampire girl gets magnificently bent over.

Hmm. I look down at vampire girl's body, while she thrashes around with her face forced up. She's big as well. I'm not going to say where, but she's certainly

bigger than me. Shall I tear them off?

「Eeeeekkk!? What!? What is it!?!」

Perhaps she sensed my threatening mood, as vampire girl started crying while struggling. Umm, you're too old to be crying still. Somehow, doesn't it seem like she's regressed to a baby? Is she going to be okay?

「What is occurring here?」

Maybe she heard vampire girl crying and shouting, as Felmina-chan walks in. Because of which, the moment she sees the unsightly state that vampire girl is in, she snorts in amusement. O... kay. It somehow seems like her gaze is totally showering vampire girl with contempt.

「It's nothing.」

Perhaps her meagre pride was triggered, as she suddenly stands up straight as if her unsightly loss of self-control had never happened. But you know, I still have her by the scruff of the neck after all, so she's almost in a silly Ina Bauer pose. On seeing that, Felmina-chan has a scornful smile again, and vampire girl's face instantly turns red. You guys sure get along well huh.

「Erm. What's with this situation?」

Once again some new guests arrive. Oni-kun and Mera. I thought it was an odd combination for a moment, but come to think of it since the two of them are having to take part in various discussions about the reorganisation of the armies it's not strange for them to be meeting face to face I guess. Unlike the other armies, Oni-kun's group and Mera's group aren't going through any large-scale replacements, but they still do have some minor adjustments taking place you know.

Having her shameful appearance seen by her attendant Mera, vampire girl struggles violently with her face a bright red. However, I don't let go of my grip on the scruff of her neck. I'll enjoy looking at this shameful appearance of vampire girl for a little longer. Ahh, this indescribable foolishness is healing my heart.

「Shiro-sama, ojou-sama is suffering.」

Mera spoke, unable to simply watch. Taking a look at her, her red face is gradually turning pale. Vampire girl is struggling quite seriously after all, so in turn I've kinda had to put a decent amount of strength into my grip on her neck. Though I'm gripping her from behind, it seems that I've stopped her breathing and her blood circulation.

While I'm sure she won't die if I continue to keep my grip up, it seems like it could become troublesome so I reluctantly let go. After she suddenly becomes free when her body had been bent like a prawn, naturally vampire girl's body succumbs to gravity and meets the ground. Since it was head first, she made a pretty decent "thud". With tears in her eyes, vampire girl is now lying sprawled with her arms and legs outstretched. OMG, this is such fun.

The three people who saw me torment vampire girl, each have their own particular reaction. Despite having an expression that says "serves you right", Felmina-chan's cheeks are twitching. It seems like she's filled with trepidation in her innermost thoughts that maybe one day she herself might be targeted with such treatment. Don't worry, don't worry. I won't do it, I won't do it. Almost certainly. Probably. Maybe. I think.

Despite being shocked, oni-kun has an expression indicating that he has nothing he can say. However, I can sense a reproachful look towards me in his eyes. Yup, you want to tell me not to do things that people hate, right oni-kun? Don't worry, don't worry. With repeated "training", eventually even bullying can cause feelings of ecstasy, as stated in bondage-type adult games. As for whether vampire girl is actually an S or an M, I think she's an M.

Mera might be expressionless but his face is full of affection, as if he is a nursery teacher watching children frolic about. Are you her guardian? Yup, he is. Mera-san, hey Mera-san? This girl has grown up to be quite pitiful, but are you really okay with taking such an indulgent stance? Umm okay, so it was me who forced her into such a shameful scene though.

Vampire girl slowly stands up, dusting down her clothes. After deliberately clearing her throat, she turns around with a straight face.

「Goshujin-sama, when you have some task for me then please call out to me normally.」

What are you spouting off about when you're the one who tried to run away the instant you saw my face, before I even had a chance to call out to you. It seems she wants to pretend that the shameful scene just now never happened. Well, it was fully witnessed by more than half the people here though.

But still, a task, huh. Actually, a task came up while this little comedy skit was taking place.

I lay a hand on vampire girl's shoulder. And then, we teleport. Our destination, is Natsume-kun's location.

「.....Goshujin-sama, if you have some task for me then please actually call out to me normally.」

Vampire girl is saying something but I ignore it. On hearing that voice, two people who were originally in this room turn around to face us. One is the owner of this room, Natsume-kun. The other is imouto-chan.

However, there is another person in this room, sitting on a chair. That person is staring into empty space with a vacant expression. That person is Hasebe-san, a candidate for becoming the next Saint.

Yup. They actually made a move on this girl who is under the auspices of the Divine Word Religion. The face of the pope comes to my mind. Another fine mess, perhaps.

Translation notes:

“Today's sacrifice is the well-known vampire girl-san” - this spoken is a formal manner, like an announcer introducing someone.

“bent like a prawn” - in the dictionary I used it said that the phrase used here means “holding out one or both hands and arching one's body backward like a shrimp (in kabuki, represents being overwhelmed by someone's power)”.

For reference, Hasebe's in-world name is Yuri. She also attends the same academy as Shun, Katia, Sue *etc.*

The Third Informal Conference ①

Author's note: The pope's point of view.

「To summarise, you are saying that it was due to mismanagement on your side?」

In response to my question, Shiro-sama silently nods her head in assent. I somehow manage to stifle the urge to hold my head in my hands, and glance down at the nearby document. The circumstances of the current incident are written there in detail. As well as what Shiro-sama is trying to achieve with those actions.

For the moment the large-scale invasion by the demons has ended, and right when I was in the middle of processing the aftermath, that document suddenly arrived. I had a bad premonition when it was handed over by Ael, the Puppet Taratekt that Ariel-sama had left here. Then, when I looked at the contents that premonition became real. It was a written report from Shiro-sama. The unexpected contents covered the steps taken to prepare for overthrowing the Anareich Kingdom.

「So like, sorry? This was so unexpected you know. Like, really, seriously.」

Ariel-sama makes apologies while staring somewhere far into the distance. While she has a light tone, I somehow sense that she is genuinely feeling apologetic, or is that just my misunderstanding?

「First of all, we request that the brainwashing is released.」

According to this document, Yurin Uren, who is studying abroad at the Anareich Kingdom academy and who is one of the reincarnators in the service of our Divine Word Religion, along with several other believers dispatched there have been brainwashed in order provide support. The one who did the brainwashing is Prince Yuugo of the Rengzand Empire. Prince Yuugo is working under the control of Shiro-sama, but due to him being left to his own devices, this mistake occurred.

I understood why Shiro-sama had not disclosed the secret agreement

between her and the Divine Word Religion to him. For myself as well, this secret agreement has only been told to the few humans that can be trusted. It would be the same for the demons as well, especially for any companions who are not human, moreover the Prince of the Empire. You can never know where this information could leak from and if such a thing ever happened it would cause a situation that cannot be undone.

However, it would be unreasonable to say that what has occurred was merely unfortunate. Although it is outside the scope of the agreement, this is a clear case of the demons conducting an offensive strike against the Divine Word Religion. While the offender might be the Prince of the Empire, since Shiro-sama was acting behind the scenes, that can be considered as an attack from the demons. Even if it was unintentional, this is not something that can be simply settled by sweeping it under the carpet.

「Please allow me to explain.」

The one who spoke, was not Shiro-sama, but the girl sitting next to her. This girl going by the name of Felmina is clearly quite a strong demon. What is odd is that amongst the members on the demon side, she alone is a demon. This single demon seems to have a lowly position amongst the members on their side.

「Firstly, we wish to request that the brainwashing is maintained on Yurin-jou and the other members.」

There is a disturbance amongst the other members in attendance on our side. I quell that by raising a hand, and fix my eyes straight on Felmina-jou. Despite being caught in my gaze, Felmina-jou shows no sign of nervousness on the surface. Assuming that she is probably still young for a demon, that's some courage she has. Perhaps it is due to her being in frequent contact with high level beings such as Ariel-sama and Shiro-sama?

「May I ask for your reasons?」

Calmly, but forcibly, I place my will in my voice. As if being engulfed in the tension, Felmina-jou swallows once, then began her explanation.

「Before we get to that, there is something we wish to inform you of. Recall that during the recent war that the Hero passed on, and that a new one would

be chosen. Regarding that new Hero, according to our investigations we have confirmed him to be the 4th Prince of the Anareich Kingdom, Shurein Zagan Anareich.]

Again, there is a disturbance on our side. I make sure not to show on my face any of the unrest in my innermost thoughts. The demons determined who the new Hero was first, beating the intelligence network of Divine Word Religion. You could say that we were completely defeated in information warfare. Terrifying.

「For him to be appointed as the new Hero was outside of our calculations. We would prefer for the reincarnators to survive, as much as possible. However, as I am sure you are aware, due to the principle of causality the Hero is an existence capable of defeating the Demon King regardless of the difference in strength. Taking that into consideration, we wish to either keep the new Hero as far away from the battlefield as possible, or otherwise it will be necessary for him to die.」

For Ariel-sama who became the Demon King, the Hero is her natural enemy. Considering her unsurpassable status values, if there is any way for Ariel-sama to be beaten, then it could only be either by a god who is free from the restraints of the System, or the Hero who has the potential to vanquish the Demon King regardless of the difference in status. It could be said that keeping the Hero as far away as possible is to be expected. For the demons who possess an intelligence network that far surpasses our own, I'm sure that it would be a simple matter as soon as the new Hero was discovered. So long as he wasn't a reincarnator.

For Shiro-sama who is a reincarnator, it appears to be her policy for the other reincarnators to survive as much as possible. If that is so, then she cannot afford to carelessly deal with young Shurein, the new Hero. It would be expected that she would proceed with as gentle methods as possible. On our side as well, we would be reluctant to casually allow a person who can defeat Ariel-sama to simply die. All the more so since he is a reincarnator, a talented person with high status values even before becoming the Hero.

However, I cannot simply accept the excuse from Shiro-sama's side on blind faith. Before the war began, Ariel-sama stated that she and Shiro-sama would

not directly participate in the war. But, considering the actual results, Shiro-sama took actions that were equivalent to killing the Hero Julius. That disproves the statement made here. Perhaps because this is informal, I must consider that any statements made here will not necessarily be completely honoured.

That being the case, just how credible are her words that she wants the reincarnators to survive as much as possible? In the first place, if those words could be believed, then Yurin should have been immediately released from the brainwashing. Since she too is a reincarnator.

「Accordingly, we wish to constrain the actions of Shurein-shi.」
「Hrm. So, how is that related to our brainwashed believers?」

In response to my question, Felmina-jou presented to us another set of documents.

「Indeed. On this occasion, we are requesting that the Divine Word Religion openly provide backup for the Empire, and consequently for Prince Yuugo.」

Written within that document, was a detailed plan for the overthrowing of the Kingdom, and also what is requested of the Divine Word Religion.

Translation notes:

See S14 for the original introduction of “Yurin Uren”, normally referred to as “Yuri”.

This has come up before (eg in “Informal Conference ③”): the -shi suffix is more formal than -san and is only applied to males and -jou is the equivalent for females. So “Shurein-shi” is pretty much equivalent to “Mr Shurein” and “Felmina-jou” would be pretty much equivalent to “Ms Felmina”. Both the pope and Felmina use more formal speech patterns.

The Third Informal Conference ②

I watch over the pope as he reads through the document intently, sweating nervously on the inside as he does so. Will he go along with it I wonder? To be blunt, I'm aware myself that it's quite an unreasonable set of demands to be making.

The plan is as follows: first of all, for Natsume-kun to systematically brainwash the humans around Yamada-kun. Then, starting from that base, to brainwash those humans who are close to the higher-ups within the Kingdom. Using those brainwashed people, to murder all those who were corrupted by Potimas. Then, make sure Yamada-kun gets labelled as the ringleader for that. It's a plan that blatantly screams "this is atrocious!"

Working from the same script, the Divine Word Religion will declare that Natsume-kun is correct and that Yamada-kun is the criminal. The Divine Word Religion is a religious organisation with strong influence amongst the humans. If such an important organisation makes a declaration, then every nation will accept that declaration as correct, regardless of the truth. Yamada-kun will become the equivalent of an internationally wanted criminal, which will severely hamper his ability to move about. It's fine if he gets caught during all the turmoil, as I believe I can deal with it on an ad hoc basis. Even in the worst case it shouldn't result in him being immediately executed or something though at least.

Because Yamada-kun has become the Hero, he has to be kept away from the Demon King no matter what. However, I have no intention of killing him. Even if he's killed, the next Hero will simply be born. In order to prevent such developments, I killed the previous generation Hero who was Yamada-kun's onii-san, but due to some unnecessary interference the whole situation has become a mess.

The overthrowing of the Kingdom is a done deal. As such, something has to be done about the reincarnators who are there. Since Yamada-kun will be placed right in the middle of that turmoil no matter what, on this occasion he will

completely be the victim. So, for the other reincarnators, I'll have Natsume-kun temporarily brainwash them, compelling them to work for our side. It would be annoying if they clumsily sided with Natsume-kun anyway. With regards to removing the brainwashing, it won't be too late even if it's left until everything is over.

So, that's the plan I eventually came up with after thinking about various options to smooth things over after an unexpected situation occurred. Geez, seriously, that pair sure screwed things up.

「Because she pissed me off by getting all flirty with him.」

「Because her snuggling up to onii-sama annoyed me.」

After I made them sit in a seiza, that's what that fucking pair of criminals insolently said. That's just totally your personal grudges, right!? Uh, yeah. I had worried that maybe I was making a mistake in the selection of personnel this time, but since this incident I've inevitably been drawn into feeling that both Natsume-kun and imouto-chan were a bad idea from the start. Such irresponsible personnel were just never going to do well.

They're now under the supervision of vampire girl, so now they should be following my instructions properly. They should be! Vampire girl is also like that as well, so I'm seriously uneasy though! There's nobody else who's suitable so there's no other way though!

That's the reason why vampire girl isn't here. I brought Mera along as a substitute, but that might have been a mistake. When vampire girl's hometown was destroyed, she was still a baby. Although she had a sense of self due to being a reincarnator, because the place was destroyed before she had developed any deep feelings for it, her resentment towards the Divine Word Religion is not actually that deep to be honest. I think her feelings are something like "They were nasty to me in the past so I hate them."

However, Mera is different. Compared to vampire girl, Mera's hatred towards the Divine Word Religion should be on a whole other level. So far he seems to be calm, but I can't tell what's going on in his innermost thoughts. It would be better if he was as easy to understand as vampire girl, but he's not as simple as her. Since it's Mera, I can't imagine him losing his temper, but I'll keep a lookout

on him just in case.

Sigh. In my original expectations, I hadn't been intending to force this matter onto the Divine Word Religion you know. But well, it's not like it was completely unexpected either. The reason why I wanted to form a collaborative relationship with the Divine Word Religion, was because they have a lot of influence amongst the humans. If something happened, my calculation was that I might be able to settle the matter by using the power of the Divine Word Religion. It's better to have as many usable options as possible. Though I had reached out for them for some additional insurance, that judgement was proven to be correct.

But then, I don't know whether the pope is going to simply agree to this or not. Since it was due to our mismanagement after all, I think they might make some kind of demand from us. In the worst case, the collaborative relationship may even collapse.

Well, if that happens then it's no big deal. It just means that from the Divine Word Religion's point of view that the tragedy will become greater. If there's going to be a problem, it would be whether Kuro would overlook that or not. He wouldn't overlook it, I'd guess.

However, it surely won't come to that. The pope wants to work with us. For the sake of taking down the elves and saving the world, and consequently the humans, he'll do anything. Yes, anything. Even an outrage against humanity. If he judges it to be necessary, any atrocity is possible. That's who this pope is. A wolf in sheep's clothing amongst the humans, a monster in a different sense to the Demon King. Such a monster, isn't about to drive us away over this. Even if he has to sacrifice his protege reincarnator, I'm sure he'll do it in an attempt to achieve his objective.

Also, there's one more thing. This incident was due to our mismanagement. That being the case, it is necessary to show our sincerity. If we make an offer that is beneficial to the Divine Word Religion, then they should take the bait.

「If this plan does not meet with your approval, then we shall immediately release the brainwashing from those affected. However, if it does meet with your approval, then we will return one of the forts captured by the demons

during the recent war. In addition, we will hand over to you all rights of possession for the elf village that we are due to jointly invade soon. Naturally, we will retrieve the Queen Taratekt that we have in the vicinity of the elf village.」

Noticing my prompting, Felmina-chan says that to the Divine Word Religion members. Returning one of the forts that the demons grabbed during the recent great war, and giving over all rights of possession of the elf village. While the Demon King had tossed a Queen Taratekt into the forest around the elf village, if that is also retrieved then they'll be able to do as they like.

To the humans, from a defensive point of view they should be quite pleased to be able to regain one of the taken forts. Also, the forest around the elf village is a treasure of natural resources. On top of that, the elves will definitely have some things of a dubious nature in their village. The pope should understand just how exceptional a condition it is to be offered everything there. Simultaneously, it shows that we aren't concerned about the power balance between the humans and demons afterwards either.

For us to return the fort is like we're throwing down the drain the results achieved by the demons in the recent great war. In addition, even though we'll have to make sacrifices in order to invade the elf village, we won't obtain anything from it. It's like we're saying that the demons will literally be working for free and dying for nothing.

For the humans, they will be able to effortlessly regain a fort, and gain everything resulting from borrowing the strength of the demons to attack the elf village. It's deeply unequal. To be blunt, this is too much as recompense for the mere brainwashing of a single girl.

「We shall go along with this plan.」

Sure enough, the pope responded immediately. As I thought.

Translation notes:

When Yuugo/Natsume refers to “him”, that's referring to Shun given the context.

“After I made them sit in a seiza” - this is a common thing to do (in manga/anime at least) to lightly punish people, to make them reflect on their actions *etc.*

Ss - Halloween

Author's note: This short story has no particular relevance to the main story.

「Trick or Treat!」

「What's with this sudden visit?」

On the day of Halloween, I charged into D's place. Don't you know!? Halloween is one of the two days a year when you can beg for sweets okay! Incidentally, the other day is Valentine's Day. My biological classification is technically female though, so I'm referring to friendship chocolates. Not that I have any friends though!

So, today is Halloween. A day when children can beg adults for sweets - what a wonderful festival. That being the case, I've come to beg D for sweets. Because I'm hyped up for this day I've even created a witch-girl costume. Witch-girl Kumoko is here in all her glory! Now then, hand over the sweets!

「Here.」

Saying so, what D held out was a single piece of snack food that you could buy for 10 yen. You're doing it wrong! Okay, I realise that this is certainly as tasty as the name suggests! But surely you have some sweets prepared that are more suitable for this event!

「You might be saying that, but that is all I currently have here.」

Gahhh!

「Since you have gone to all that effort, how about you go buy some sweets like that?」

「Eh? No way!」

If I went out dressed like this I'd stand out way too much you know. Why do I have to do that kind of shaming play then?

「In that case, why did you even come dressed like that?」

「Going with the flow.」

I thought that D's expressionless face is especially scary this time. I can't tell

what she's thinking at all. I think I have a poker face on the outside, but I don't think it's as much as D's.

After thinking for a short while, D slowly stands up. When she was sitting she was definitely wearing ordinary clothes, yet the moment she stood up her clothes had already changed to match my witch-girl costume. Even if my eyes are made out of seaweed or something, all I can say about the moment she changed her clothes is that something-or-other happened.

「Well, shall we get going?」

「Go... where...?」

「Outside of course.」

「Why... would... we... do... that...?」

「Because that looks to be more interesting.」

Without resistance, I was dragged out to a cosplay festival venue. I'll just say that twin witch-girls were very popular. I'm worn out..... Today's lesson: nothing good will come of carelessly involving D in events.

Translation notes:

“My biological classification is technically female” - I guess you should take this to imply that Shiro doesn't consider herself to be “feminine”.

“friendship chocolates” - In Japan, Valentine's Day is basically a day when the girls give chocolate to various people: family, friends, colleagues, and also love interests.

10 yen - about 10 cents / pence. Ie pretty much the cheapest an item for sale can be.

“shaming play” - S&M terminology. In this case, the type where the person goes out in public wearing something embarrassing.

“Even if my eyes are made out of seaweed” - possibly referring to how cartoon like faces will sometimes be drawn on a bed of rice (eg in a homemade bento) and the eyes would simply be plain seaweed (dried black flakes). Basically, Shiro has no clue how D did what she did.

“Go... where...?” - Shiro speaks this line (and the next) in an unusually polite and also halting voice (as if she's scared).

Angry Oni

The conference that began today hasn't yet ended after one day, with slow progress made on various detailed adjustments to the plan, the discussion stretched out over the entire day. Compared to the second conference which was little more than a face-to-face meeting, the conference this time began the real work on preparing all the steps so I guess you could say it was natural. In addition, the Divine Word Religion was also being forced to collaborate in an area that hadn't originally been planned, so there were many things to discuss.

The detailed schedule for overthrowing the Kingdom. Seizing hold of the Empire. Laying the groundwork for the other countries. The plans for the march towards the elf village. Devising the means for the demons to be invited into the human territories. The plans for the march towards the elf village for the demons. Once the discussion started on the details it was endless.

Eventually the conference continued until nightfall. The Divine Word Religion treated us to dinner, and even prepared rooms for us so that we were able to have accommodations. If I asked Shiro-san I would be able to return to the demon territories, but it seems that everyone felt like staying over today.

I took a break in the room that lent to me. Before I went to sleep, I wanted to be able to focus on creating magic swords until I used up all my MP.

「Sasa-ya-a-a-n! You still up?」

Just when I completed the first magic sword, there was a knock on the door and at the same time Kusama's voice rang out.

「Yeah I'm still up. Also, didn't I tell you to call me Wrath?」

While opening the door, I warned him.

「Sorry, sorry.」

Kusama came into the room without looking the least bit shy. While sighing to myself, I closed the door. Kusama is carrying some sweets and drinks in both hands, so it's clear that he's fully intending to stay for a while. With this, I'll

have to give up on being able to create any more magic swords.

「Oh? This is a magic sword?」

The sharp sighted Kusama spotted the magic sword that I'd just created.

「That's right.」

「Hey hey, Sasa-, Wrath, your skill has gotta be about creating magic swords or something like that right?」

「Yeah.」

Kusama asked with his eyes sparkling, and I responded with an affirmation. It's likely that I was investigated when I was a rampaging ogre in the human territories in the past. That's why I introduced myself in a way that conveyed that. And also, based on the documents from that time, I'm sure that they could make a rough guess as to what my particular skill was like.

「What's your skill, Kusama?」

「Me? With my “Ninja” skill, I can use shadow clones and ninja arts and the like.」

I figured it was a long shot to ask, but Kusama readily disclosed his own skill. Ahh, yeah, Kusama was the type who couldn't keep a secret after all. Most likely, he doesn't even recognise that it would be better to keep his skill a secret.

「That sounds handy.」

「Well, it's handy in it's own way, but I'm more attracted by magic swords. You can't create magic swords without using ingredients from extremely strong monsters, right? That's why they're crazy valuable.」

Is that so? Since I can create them so long as I have MP, I don't have any sense of them being valuable. They feel disposable to me.

「Hey, hey. Is there any chance, perhaps, that maybe you could create one for me?」

In response to Kusama's begging, I gave the okay after thinking about it for a bit. The reason why I had thought about it for a moment, was that I had misgivings that if I make too many magic swords then the market could collapse. However, I recalled that I had mass produced them at Shiro-san's

request for equipping her 10th Army with magic swords. Thinking that it's a bit too late to be worrying about that, I decided to accept Kusama's request.

After asking what kind of weapon would be good, I began the creation process. Kusama watched that with great interest. Thus I created them - a pair of short swords. Since he's a ninja, I added the effect of the darkness attribute to go with it. That might not match Kusama's own image though. I named them Saku and Mochi.

「Wahoo! Thank you! I'll take real good care of them!」

「That's fine, but please use them properly okay? If you don't use them, then it's a waste of talent.」

「Sure, sure.」

I handed over Saku and Mochi, and Kusama looked at them with a broad grin. It's the reaction of a child receiving a new toy. Since he's so happy about it, it means it was worthwhile creating them. I go through the sweets that Kusama brought, while waiting for him to have had enough of the swords.

「Sasa-yan, do you feel a bit better now?」

Kusama just casually asks that. He asked that completely out of nowhere, but I don't need to ask why he asked such a question though. Since my bad mood can easily be understood when seen from the side.

「I guess so. It was a bit of a change of pace.」

With the conversation with Kusama, I think my frayed feelings have calmed down a bit. It really is just a little bit though, since there's no resolution at a fundamental level. This irritation which is coiled up within my chest with no way to let it out, is probably not going to clear away any time soon.

「Sasa-yan, why are you in such a bad mood? I might not be reliable, but you could at least consult with me, okay?」

In response to Kusama's atypical serious voice, I realise that I must be in an extremely bad state. Even if I talk to Kusama about it, it surely won't resolve the problem. However, thinking that it might divert my mood, I started to tell the truth bit by bit.

When I first heard about this plan from Shiro-san, the very first thing that

came to mind was an indescribable discomfort. A visceral feeling of disgust that couldn't be explained with words. What that was, was the repugnance I felt towards the method of using brainwashing.

Brainwashing was what caused me to gain the Wrath skill. It's a despicable method that I hate more than anything else. Yet that is what Shiro-san is using without any hesitation. She's already using it. Natsume is brainwashing people one after the other, while he himself is completely unaware that he's been brainwashed by Shiro-san. I can't laugh it off.

If it really is necessary, then even I might be able to endure it. However, the recent incident was unexpected even for Shiro-san - it was done "inadvertently". People fell into disaster, "inadvertently".

Brainwashing, both for those affected by it and those around them, is a disaster. I killed my little sister by own hands when brainwashed. My brainwashed elder brother was led to perform similar atrocities. When I saw that, I remember being so angry that my vision went completely red.

In this situation, the brainwashed Hasebe-san will surely fall into disaster. In addition, Shun as well after he's betrayed by Hasebe-san.

I am in the position of supporting that. Actually, rather than supporting, it might be more accurate to say that I'm in the position of leading that. Although I hadn't know about this situation, I had chosen to support Shiro-san. And that choice has already reached the stage where it cannot be reversed. At this late stage, just because I could evade responsibility for the current brainwashing issue, I can't stop the plan going forwards at all.

I am about to do things that are as atrocious as what those brainwashed are about to do, or maybe even more so. Beyond this point, no matter what reason I may have, those actions will simply be evil to the victims. I am, evil.

To be like that makes me feel nauseous. Even so, I can't stop. I don't even think of stopping. I mustn't think about it.

「I don't think you have to take it that seriously though. Whether you're "good" or "evil", at the end of the day doesn't it just depend on your standpoint? In that case, you just gotta keep faith that your standpoint is a "good" one.」

Kusama's thoughts on hearing my story, were so straightforward that they were dazzling. I'm jealous of you for being able to say it like that.

Either way, this is not something that can be stopped with my personal feelings. In that case, I can only press on until the bitter end. Even if it is something evil, I will help Shiro-san until the very end. Yes, until I die.

Kusama「Kaiten Kenbu Rokuren!」

Oni「Don't do that inside the room, idiot.」

Translation notes:

“What's your skill, Kusama?” - it's not explained in this chapter but you could say this is said with the assumption that the reincarnators know they all have one special skill given to them. So the implicit meaning is “What's your unique skill”.

“I named them Saku and Mochi” - Saku (朔) means “new moon” and Mochi (望) means “full moon”. Incidentally, for those who are wondering, the specific sword type is “tantou” (短刀).

“Kaiten Kenbu Rokuren” - a special move used by Shinomori Aoshi (from Rurouni Kenshin) that used two short swords.

Insane Oni

It's the dead of night. As I possess the Sleep Nullity skill, I don't require sleep. However, that doesn't mean that I have no need of sleep at all, but just that there's no negative side-effects as a result of not sleeping. The fatigue accumulated while awake does not vanish. The most suitable method to recover from fatigue is to sleep, so in the end, despite acquiring Sleep Nullity, I still can't avoid sleeping entirely. With the Sleep Nullity skill it is theoretically possible that going one's whole life without sleeping would not cause any problems, but that would only be possible for someone with sufficiently high enough status values such that fatigue is negligible, and on top of that someone who is rather strange in some respects. While physical fatigue can be papered over with sufficiently high status values, there's nothing that can be done about mental fatigue. For a person to be able to continue to disregard that and still be active, they surely could not be said to be someone with a normal mentality.

「Like me then.」

「Indeed. That remark is certainly persuasive.」

In the dead of night, a time when there's usually nobody else but me in the office, there was still a voice that responds to my voice. A fraction of the light that is illuminating the documents near my hands is also reaching the other party, revealing a young man with a pallid face. His appearance might be youthful, but he has a mature ambiance. However, he doesn't seem to actually be elderly either. When a person has evolved from a demon or monster, their appearance and their true age does not necessarily match, but I'm sure that the true age of the young man in front of me is not particularly high. Despite that, he possesses the dignified presence of someone who has been alive for over a century. To think that there was still someone like this hidden on the demon's side - I can't help but be surprised by their depth of talent.

The man's name is Merazofis. Sensing that I was continuing to work without sleep in spite of it being the dead of night, he said he came to check up on me. I might be treating him as a guest currently, but normally we would be mutual

enemies. Because of such things I had arranged for the lodgings of the demon members to be in a partly isolated location, but I guess I shouldn't be too surprised that it wasn't that effective in practice. Considering how openly he went roaming around, the precautions have become absurd. There's virtually no meaning to taking precautions anyway. So long as Ariel-sama and Shiro-sama are around, it's probably meaningless no matter how many precautions we take. Because they have the strength to overcome every precaution we could take. And most likely, the man in front of me as well.

Without glancing at the man I continue to work my hands. Signing documents, or possibly writing down corrections. While doing that work, I exchanged idle talk with Merazofis-dono. The conversation began from an inquiry at the start as to whether I'm okay without sleep, then it changed into a discussion about the abnormalities of those people who use the Sleep Nullity skill before I noticed. That was the conversation just now.

「In your eyes, do I seem abnormal perhaps?」

「Indeed. At the least, it cannot be considered normal. While I am slightly curious as to what has driven you to go to such lengths, I shall refrain from finding out.」

Saying so, Merazofis-dono turned his back towards me. It seems the conversation ends here. It really was brief. Perhaps it was out of consideration to not interfere with my work, but I wouldn't have expected the conversation to be over so soon.

「May I enquire as to why you won't try to find out?」

Perhaps that's why I called out to him as he was leaving. Amongst the members on the demons side, there's many enigmatic ones whose intentions cannot be figured out even by me. This man is also one who I cannot comprehend. Perhaps it was because I was in a state of mind of wanting to learn even a little bit more about him that I attempted to prolong the conversation.

「Because I think it is ojou-sama who should find out about you.」

Ahh. The answer I got back, was more than sufficient to understand this man. That this man is also another one who is not normal.

「I see. I understand you perfectly.」

Without intending to, I couldn't help muttering that. The man bowed and left the room. The refinement of those movements would be suitable for an attendant of a high class noble. In reality he is an attendant serving the person he referred to as ojou-sama.

I open a drawer in the desk, and take out a certain document from there. The document for the detailed investigation on the Keren household. I leaf through the document, and locate the entry I was looking for. Recorded there is the name of the attendant who served Lady Keren since childhood. The name of Merazofis.

Amongst all the attendants of the Keren household, he was particularly valued, the person who was trusted in all respects by the lord. His personality was serious and sincere. Despite that, he was not an overly straight-laced person and it seems he was thought of fondly by his colleagues. In that regard he doesn't seem any different now.

However, while he might not seem any different, he's gone insane on the inside. Just one aspect of him has stayed the same, while everything else has been completely cast away. For him to have even abandoned all feelings of hatred towards the one who drove the person he loved to her death - such a person cannot be normal.

According to the documents, there were signs that Merazofis-dono had fallen in love with the lady wife of the Keren household. And yet despite all that, he was approved of by her husband, and trusted in all respects. Since I did not know him at the time, I can only guess as to the degree of his feelings. However, those were surely not ordinary feelings. Despite facing the head of the Divine Word Religion which was the organisation that caused his feelings to be outrageously trampled over and to lose his most beloved person, he didn't display even the slightest hatred. In that situation where we were both alone, he didn't display any signs that he had any intention of killing me. Instead, as calm as the still surface of a lake, there was not even any fluctuations seen in his emotions.

Everything he does is for his ojou-sama, for Sophia-jou. I am a stepping stone

to help Sophia-jou grow to adulthood. For him, that's probably all that he can see.

He's just plain terrifying. That is a monster in human form. His thoughts have already deviated from human norms. There's almost nobody normal around Ariel-sama. That ojou-sama of his, Sophia-jou, and also Felmina-jou could just about be called normal in comparison I guess. In their cases, they are far outside the norm, even if they haven't reached the level of insanity.

Considering everything that has piled up, I breathe out a sigh. Then, I begin to move my hands again after they had stopped for a short while. I must press ahead with my work as quickly as possible. Because there's no time to lose. Indeed, the great task of breaking the Divine Word Religion, is about to begin.

A liberal translation:

Mera「Yikes, this old man is crazy.....」

pope「Yikes, this man is crazy.....」

Translation notes:

The “liberal translation” at the end is by the author. Take it to be a tongue in cheek interpretation of each other.

Tipsy

Author's note: Demon King's point of view.

「Uwah. Sniffle! Hic!」

「Uih-hih-hih-hih!」

Felmina-chan who has broken down crying and sniffing while slumped on the ground, and Shiro-chan who is staring into space while laughing eerily. It's chaos. Just how was it again that things turned out like this?

The beginning of this, ah yes, this all began when I went to Dustin's place to snatch some top grade wine. I called out to Shiro-chan saying "Let's have a pajama party!", and dragged in Felmina-chan while at it to begin a modest little drinking party. Umm, yeah. I want to ask myself why I wanted to let Shiro-chan drink or why I have a death wish. It's all Dustin's fault for secretly hoarding some good wine. It's also the case that I wanted to watch over Felmina-chan to make sure that she doesn't do anything stupid though.

Since this girl is smart, based on the contents of the proposal that Shiro-chan made to Divine Word Religion, she would have realised just how much it disadvantages the demons. Also, based on the arguing back and forth until now and due to the nature of the System and so on, she should also have realised that Shiro-chan isn't an ally of the demons. Felmina-chan should have realised that Shiro-chan is with the demon faction in order to make use of the demons, and would readily abandon the demons if they ever lost their utility value.

That would be half-right, and half-wrong. While Shiro-chan is certainly making use of the demons, she isn't intending to abandon them for the time being. If she really was intending to abandon them, then there's no way that she would have left alive that traitorous 2nd Army commander after all.

However, Felmina-chan wouldn't be aware to that extent. Which is why she might judge Shiro-chan to be harmful to the demons and become hostile to her. Even though she has no chance of winning.

I had previously investigated Felmina-chan's personal history. While Shiro-

chan probably felt like she was picking up an abandoned dog, this girl was actually born to a good place and with good abilities. She was born to a prestigious noble family. She is the ex-fiancee to Waldo-kun, who is the eldest son from a similarly prestigious noble family, even if he's currently been emasculated by Sophia-chan. Since her childhood she's been thoroughly trained to support the demons who are in a state of decline, and she herself lives by that creed, a natural-born aristocrat. If it's for the future sake of the demons, then she won't hesitate to eliminate anyone who could harm them, and possesses the cool-headedness to achieve it. That's exactly the reason why she regarded Sophia-chan as dangerous when she was spreading Charm around at the academy, and took actions to forcibly eliminate her. Well, it's sad to say, but due to the overwhelming difference in ability it seemed she wasn't even noticed.

Considering that's how Felmina-chan is, I was worried about what she would do when she heard about the proposal for this conference. That proposal has no benefits for the demons. Taken from the perspective of rebuilding the demons after the System collapses, she wouldn't want the lost technology from the elf village to be handed over to the humans for a start, and from a self-defence point of view it would also be virtually impossible for her to accept simply returning the forts that were only gained after great loss. Felmina-chan would want to stop that no matter what, I'm sure.

So, considering the case with Sophia-chan, I wondered if she might lose her temper and attack Shiro-chan. Since the old lineages amongst the demons put their trust in strength, despite being smart they can be rather simplistic muscle-brains at times you know. For now I figured I'd take a wait-and-see approach and try have her drink some wine while at it, but I hadn't expected her to be a crying drunk at all though.

「Uwahr. What can I do-o-o? Just what can I do-o-o? Just what did I do to deserve this-s-s?」

She ended up in this condition merely after draining the first cup. While she hangs her head, I can almost see a heavy black shadow looming behind her.

Yup. This is the pattern where after having to do all sorts of things serving under Shiro-chan, she's learnt all too much about the dark art of diplomacy. In

addition, it seems she's gotten stuck in a blind alley because she also knows just how strong Shiro-chan is, so even if she wants to do something there's nothing she can do. Under the influence of being drunk, she's muttering her problems in front of the person herself. You sure have it rough huh.

Then, the main culprit behind all that, has for a while been taking out from another dimension something that couldn't be televised to families without using a censorship mosaic, tossing them into her mouth, then munching them. Wow, just what is that I wonder. Currently there is huge alarm ringing in my head, saying that it's dangerous to touch Shiro-chan right now. I am rather curious as to what she is actually eating, but if worry about it then I've lost. If I've lost then in the worst case my life might as well be over.

We're supposed to be drinking some nice top grade wine here, but I can't enjoy the taste at all! There's Felmina-chan who might actually sink into the ground if left alone, and then there's Shiro-chan who in her current state has transformed into the greatest living threat to this planet. It sure is strange. I had imagined a "pajama party" being more about having fun squeals and giggles though. How did it turn out like this? Also, will I live to see the sun rise tomorrow...?

pope「My wine.....」

Translation notes:

"Tipsy" - the title could also be translated as "under the influence" or "intoxicated" or even "the smell of alcohol". It doesn't specifically mean "drunk".

Blood 35 - After The End

Under goshujin-sama's orders, I've gotten stuck with acting as Natsume-kun's assistant. To be honest, I'm not really good with Natsume-kun. He was at the summit of the school hierarchy, so he was someone far above me who was low in the social standings. Also, due to the way he would continuously ignore the opinion of others and be jerking others around with orders, somehow or other I feel he's like goshujin-sama. Perhaps because of all that, even though my status values are far higher than his, somehow I couldn't oppose him. Thanks to that I've built up a huge amount of stress over the last few days.

What I've been up to, is making use of Charm on the higher-ups in one part of the Empire, turning them into puppets. From that basis, the soldiers are being assembled and preparations for an expedition are being made. Then, once Natsume-kun gives the command, they'll be able to march on the elf village right away. However, I didn't make a move on the magician who is called the strongest in the empire. I only looked at him from afar, but he seemed to be considerably strong for a human, so I wasn't quite confident as to whether or not my Charm would work on him. Well, by having the higher-ups give out orders, that magician can also be ordered about indirectly anyway, and most of all Natsume-kun himself is the Prince as well. Even if I don't seize all of them, there shouldn't be any problems.

And so, after I'd assisted Natsume-kun take possession of the Empire, I returned to the Demon King's Castle for the first time in several days. That being said, I can't just laze around either. After getting one night's sleep, next I had to participate in the conference with the Divine Word Religion after all.

Apparently the conference with the Divine Word Religion is progressing steadily. It seems that Merazofis has been participating as a substitute for me, but he said that progress is being made steadily and without any problems. At that time I was shown something like a recording of the proceedings, but unfortunately it was all gobbledygook to me. Even if I'm shown this stuff like political horse-trading or the details of military tactics, I won't really get it you

know. Since I took lessons on the basics at the academy, if I was so inclined then I could probably make sense of it if I read through it carefully, but I can't be bothered. It's just such a hassle. It's best to just leave these kinds of details to those that understand them. To handle what I'm ordered to do by goshujin-sama is enough for me. Until the end.

「Ugh! It stinks!」

On opening the door, my nose was assaulted by a smell that was laden in the air. The strong smell of alcohol alone was enough that it felt like it could make me drunk. Having walked into the room, I opened the windows fully to refresh the air. Even with that the dregs of the smell didn't disappear, and with a grimace I shifted my gaze to the owner of the room.

「Ugh, uhhh...」

The owner of the room, was sprawled on the bed while looking pale. Anyone could tell from the condition of this girl, that she was suffering from a hangover.

「Hey, you do realise that you have a conference with the Divine Word Religion today, right?」

I called out to the body that was sloppily lying on the bed, or rather, to Felmina. I'm not sure whether she heard me or not, as all I could hear was a muffled groan, so it seems she can't talk properly. On looking around the room in exasperation, on top of the desk was a bundle of documents, and on the opposite side I caught sight of a collection of empty bottles. It was clear at a glance that with a pacing like she was drinking tea while organising the documents, she was actually drinking alcohol while working. And with there being a number of empty bottles that had been carelessly allowed to roll off onto the floor, the room had taken on the appearance of that of a useless drunken bum.

How did things end up like that? At the least, before I went to the Empire a few days ago, I hadn't seen or heard of Felmina having an any inclination towards alcohol at all, right? Just what chain of events led to her evolving into such a drunkard? Or rather, not so much evolving as degenerating?

Because Felmina hadn't arrived yet, I had come here at Ariel-san's request to check up on her, but I never expected her to be hungover. Naturally I associate

alcohol with goshujin-sama, but for such a diligent and straight-laced person like Felmina to actually expose herself to such foolishness..... Seriously, what happened?

「Ugh、* * * * *」

Ding-dong. Please wait for a moment.

「Are you feeling better?」

「Yes. While having to be cared for by you of all people is the ultimate disgrace, fortunately I am feeling much better now. It is exceedingly annoying to say this, but thank you very much.」

「If you're able to say that much then I guess you really are better huh.」

Even though I went to the effort of cleaning up the vomit and even using Treatment Magic on her, this is her attitude. She really pisses me off.

「So? Just what is the meaning of this awful scene? Did goshujin-sama force you to drink 100 shots of alcohol or what?」

The only thing I could conceive of was that this was due to some kind of crazy punishment game, but since we're talking about that goshujin-sama, the scary thing is that it's actually quite possible.

「No. It is merely because I could not cope unless I drank alcohol myself.」

Perhaps it's because she was still feeling unwell, but unusually for Felmina she straight out voiced her complaints.

「Can I ask just one thing?」

「What?」

Normally she wouldn't seriously ask me anything, but since Felmina is still weakened, I found myself thinking against my better judgement that I ought to answer her properly. Yes, against my better judgement.

「After goshujin-sama has brought the System to an end, what are you going to do?」

Because of that, I wasn't able to respond right away to Felmina's question. Normally I might have just tried to evade the issue with a response laced with sarcasm. However, because I thought I should respond seriously against my

better judgement, I couldn't say such a response. Because I had no response.

「Sorry. I asked something stupid. Please report to Maou-sama and goshujin-sama that I am still preparing things and ask them to please wait a little bit longer.」

Felmina saw through that my lack of a response was my response. Driven out from the room, I was at a loss. For the time being, I set out to return to where goshujin-sama and the others were, as requested. However, even as I walked forwards, I wasn't able to see what was ahead of me.

Whether it's goshujin-sama, or whether it's Ariel-san, and also, whether it's Kyouya-kun, they're focused on the end. Heading towards that end, they are taking action. I am doing the same, but there is one clear difference. That is, whether they are focused on what's after the end, or not.

I think goshujin-sama is taking action with a focus on what's after the end. In Ariel-san's case, she has no future after the end, and is taking action as though the end is the end. In Kyouya-kun's case, probably..... Amongst them, I'm the only one with no assumptions about what's after the end. I'm unable to.

After the System has ended, what will become of me? I have no idea at all. For now, I can just abide by goshujin-sama's orders. But, what about afterwards? For what comes afterwards, I will have to think about what actions to take myself. Because it's most likely that goshujin-sama will no longer be there beside me anymore.

I want to ask what to do myself. Just what should I do I wonder?

Vamp「I'm the one with more experience in dealing with puke girls! I've perfected the way to dispose of it as well!」

Shiro「.....」

Translation notes:

“After the end” - this is slightly awkward to translate since it can mean both the “end” itself and also what's beyond it. Sort of “above and beyond the end” but within the context of the chapter it's more about what's after the “end”. Based on the context, the “end” here would be the “end of the System”.

“Ding-dong. Please wait for a moment” - imagine this as being a holding

screen that comes up on a TV or similar. There is a similar “notice” back in chapter 86 (Dance of Victory).

“goshujin-sama will no longer be there beside me anymore” - to be clear about what’s expressed in the original Japanese, there is a specific but subtle sense that Sophia would prefer to be with Shiro.

“Vamp” - for these little bonus lines at the end of some chapters, the author tends to use a shortened form of their name (or how they’re referred to by Shiro or in chapter titles). In Sophia’s case this is actually just “blood” but this wouldn’t make much sense in context so I changed it to “Vamp” instead.

“Puke girls” - See Blood 31 for the reference.

Oni 19 - The End With Nothing After

「Say goshujin-sama, once the troubles in this world have ended, what are you going to do?」

Sophia-san asked that before the conference with the Divine Word Religion began, at a time when we were in the waiting room, waiting for the other side to complete their preparations. Since we got here, Sophia-san appeared to be pondering about something. I bet that was about this question. Sophia-san is concerned about what happens after the end.

On being asked, Shiro-san's usual expression never changed, and after a short pause she replied.

「Run away.」
「Eh?」

The voice of inexpressible doubt that Sophia-san's raised, is I think something that spoke for what all of us here felt in our hearts. Run away? From who? From what?

Based on what I know, I can't even imagine that there's an opponent that Shiro-san would have to run away from. If there happens to be one, there is that other god besides Shiro-san called Kuro, but I somehow feel that it's not about him. More than anything else, the very fact that Shiro-san would state that she's going to run away, is just so unexpected to me that I can't make sense of it. From my dealings with Shiro-san to date, I had thought that she had the type of personality where she would do whatever it takes to accomplish what she wants to achieve. If it's for that purpose then she will do absolutely anything. For that Shiro-san to actually state that she's going to run away regardless of how it appears to others, is out of character for my mental impression of her.

It seems that everyone else is also thinking the same thing, as they all have a puzzled expression. Uniquely, Ariel-san only had a puzzled expression for a moment, then quickly showed an expression where she seemed to hit upon the

reason and accept it. Does Ariel-san know something that the rest of us don't?

「Shiro-chan, are you sure it's okay to actually say that aloud?」

While suspiciously glancing around restlessly, Ariel-san said that. Ominous. From Ariel-san's state, she has the air of someone who is afraid of something. There exists something that neither Shiro-san or Ariel-san can do anything about, is what that attitude indicates. After coming so far, I'm suddenly worried about whether there is something capable of returning Shiro-san's plan to square one.

「It's okay but it's also not okay. Which is why I don't really want to talk about it.」

Even Shiro-san's tone is somewhat more firm than normal. It's almost like she's being vigilant about something.

「Shiro-san, is that existence something that will obstruct our plan?」

I decided to try asking about what I'm worried about. If the plan that I had thought was progressing well was actually crossing a dangerous bridge without me knowing, then I think I ought to know the truth.

「Ahh. That's okay, that's okay. You don't need to worry about that Wrath-kun. Basically, that person will surely not interfere with the plan. After all is said and done...」 「Demon King」

Shiro-san interrupts what Ariel-san was about to say. Shiro-san shakes her head, and on seeing that Ariel-san also nods her head in acknowledgement.

「Well, it's best to just regard it as something you don't need to worry about.」
「I can't just leave it at that you know.」

「Wrath-kun, this is one of those situations where you're better off not knowing, okay?」

When I still refused to back down, Ariel-san refused to explain any further. After Ariel-san and Shiro-san refused to talk, I wasn't able to drag out any explanation. I had no choice but to give up on pressing them any further. However, because Ariel-san said that I don't need to worry about it, there shouldn't be any impediment to the plan.

「Where will you run away to?」

Just when I was thinking that the conversation was over, Sophia-san brought it up again. In spite of Shiro-san's words just now that she didn't really want to talk about it.

「Dunno.」

As expected, Shiro-san casually responded. Since Sophia-san brought up the topic again despite it being something Shiro-san didn't want to talk about, a certain amount of irritation could be heard in that short response.

「Give me a proper answer.」

Perhaps she didn't notice the irritation, or perhaps she noticed it but decided to ask the question anyway, but with an unusually serious expression Sophia-san raised the question again to Shiro-san. With those closed eyes of hers, Shiro-san silently faced Sophia-san who in turn stared intently at Shiro-san's face. They continued to stare at each other for a short while, then the one who gave up first was Sophia-san.

「Could I... come with you?」

She asked that in a somewhat embarrassed sounding voice that seemed about to vanish. I had the sense that she was uneasy, or perhaps instead, that she somehow knew what the answer would be from the start but had to ask anyway.

「You can't.」

Shiro-san's reply was short, but it was still a clear refusal. Sophia-san's expression was pretty much saying "as expected", but showed sadness as well.

「While you can't come with me, you can choose whether to live here or live on Earth though, okay?」

Shiro-san suddenly dropped that bombshell.

On Earth? No, now that I think about it, it wouldn't be strange if Shiro-san has been to Earth. If anything, it would be more strange if she hadn't been to Earth. While it was quite some time ago, Shiro-san did drink canned coffee right in front of us. Canned coffee, which doesn't exist on this planet. That was a well

known brand of canned coffee from Japan. To get hold of such a thing, it shouldn't be possible without going to Japan.

Shiro-san has a way to get to Earth. Most likely, with Teleportation. With that, it's possible to go to Earth huh.

It's not like I never thought about being able to return to Earth. I specifically thought about that many times immediately after I was reborn in this world. That I want to return to Earth. That wish... can be granted?

「I prefer to stay here. I don't have any lingering affection for the Earth anyway.」

While I was thinking, Sophia-san easily rejected the option to return to Earth.

「It's not like I could return to how I was originally even if I went back to Earth. More than anything, I'm rather fond of how I am now. Even if I return to Earth after all this time, dealing with all the red tape sounds like it would be a pain anyway. In that case, I'll live here doing whatever I like.」

“Doing whatever I like” sure sounds like a typical response for Sophia-san. Not thinking anything, simply living however your own heart sees fit. If I said this to her it would probably anger her, but I feel her way of life of not thinking anything really suits Sophia-san. I feel that she's living freely.

「What about you, Kyouya-kun?」

Sophia-san brought up the subject of me as well. However, my answer is decided.

「I also, prefer to stay here.」

I have a lingering affection for the Earth. However, I cannot return. Sasajima Kyouya is already dead. What's here, is merely the oni called Wrath. I won't return anyway - I can't return.

「Oh, whatever.」

Sophia-san easily overlooked my response. Even without asking, she probably expected my response. That I have no intention of returning. The reason why she asked me anyway, might have been because she intended to give me a chance. To let me think that I can still turn back, or that there's also other

options.

However, no matter what options might be available, I have already decided. So, I'm sorry. Because it's meaningless to discuss to the future with me.

Felmina「」

No response. She's just a drunk.

Translation notes:

"The end with nothing after" - in a way this is quite a literal translation but the implication is more like "after the end, I have no future". It's building on the theme on the previous chapter and the title is similar to how Sophia described Ariel's situation in relation to the "end". Reading between the lines, it seems likely that Wrath wants to die once the plan has ended - and also that Sophia has realised this.

"that person" - Ariel is indirectly referring to D, using a respectful expression.

The coffee incident is from chapter 262.

"No response. She's just a drunk" - there's a line in the Dragon Quest which is almost identical that became a bit of a meme, except with "corpse" instead of "drunk".

Chapter 284 - Downfall Of The Kingdom

The pope of the Divine Word Religion has made a personal proclamation. The contents of which are that Prince Yuugo of the Rengzand Empire has been selected as the new Hero.

Almost simultaneously with that proclamation, the finishing touches in the Kingdom are being carried out. Natsume-kun has done a good job. Using brainwashing on the reincarnators, except on Yamada-kun and sensei, he's taken possession of Ooshima-kun and Hasebe-san, and has already seized part of the Kingdom. Furthermore, by using deceitful words to fool the first prince and the queen who are obsessed with the throne, he's managed to bring them over to his side. It seems that Potimas had unwittingly induced the current king to have Yamada-kun become the next king. The first prince and the queen were easily won over when it was put to them that if the king's plans are carried out then they'd never take the throne.

All the preparations are in order. Just in case, vampire girl and I are on standby in the Kingdom, but unless some highly irregular situation occurs then I have no intention of getting involved. Unless it seems like one of the reincarnators is about to die, or something like that, then I'll simply watch over the developments.

「Muhahah. At last. At last I will be able to scare the hell out of them!」

Natsume-kun, disguised as one of the first prince's guards, has a wicked smile plastered on his face. Next to him, is imouto-chan with a somewhat vacant expression.

Since halfway through, imouto-chan has been brainwashed by Natsume-kun. While imouto-chan might not have been aware of just how serious the situation was at the start, she gradually became aware that what they were doing was to overthrow her own native country, the Kingdom. Furthermore, completing that would result in the deaths of many people amongst the higher-ups within the Kingdom, including her own father the king. While she might be a yandere with her explosive love for her nii-sama, it's not like that's completely blown away all

her common sense either. There's no way that she wouldn't realise what the effects of everything that's she's doing will have on her beloved nii-sama. Therefore, before she fully realised all that, I had Natsume-kun brainwash her. If she had been left fully conscious then there's no telling when she would get in our way after all.

Besides, this way, even after she's returned to being fully conscious, the pretense of her being brainwashed has been established. Isn't this a delicious situation for her where she can even be saved from the evil influence of brainwashing by her nii-sama? How moving that would be. I'll have nothing to do with what happens after that though. Go have your emotional scars soothed by your beloved nii-sama. Although I might have instigated it, she did half of it by her own will. Afterwards, even if she regrets what she's done it's no concern of mine.

「Well then? What should I do?」

Vampire girl, who I brought with me, is showing signs of having too much time on her hands. So far she has contributed by using Charm on the higher-ups within the Empire and also on the soldiers in the Kingdom, but she has nothing to do in the main event. Ah, wait.

「Go kill Potimas.」

Taking advantage of the disturbance, I'll have her kill Potimas who is in the Kingdom. From what I could see the Potimas here isn't a cyborg or anything like that anyway, so getting rid of him should be simple. If she has nothing to do, it's better to have her kill time by killing him.

「Got it.」

Vampire girl acknowledged, and left to kill Potimas. Yeah. Feel free to go wild to your heart's content.

Vampire girl has been quite lively recently. It seems that she was approached about a deal by the pope from the Divine Word Religion, and since accepting that she's been having this creepy looking grin on her face from time to time. On top of that, she's started referring to the pope as "oji-sama" as well, so I've become worried that maybe she's finally gone mental. According to Mera there's nothing to worry about so I've let her be as she is. I was even told that

“since you are going to leave ojou-sama behind it is nothing to do with you”, so I was completely denied from getting involved any further. Somehow I’m feeling a little sad.

I saw vampire girl off, and Natsume-kun went away looking euphoric, leaving me to just watch over the sequence of events. I’m in a room inside the castle, elegantly treating myself to some tea. Incidentally, there’s no problem if I intake the caffeine contained within the tea. After I collapsed when drinking coffee previously, I went over to the Earth and tried to investigate, and found that spiders get drunk when they drink coffee. That’s caused by the caffeine contained within the coffee, but in my case it seems that I’m reacting not to the caffeine itself but coffee that contains caffeine. When I timidly drank some decaffeinated coffee nothing happened. Similarly, nothing happens when I drink tea that contains caffeine. It makes me think “what the fuck”, but there’s nothing I can do about it. I’ve no choice but to give up and just consider it to be part of my specifications.

While thinking about such inconsequential things, using fluoroscopy and my clones I observe the farce that’s unfolding throughout the castle. Yamada-kun and imouto-chan arrive together at the king’s chambers, then imouto-chan murders the king. Picking their moment, the first prince and his guards rush in. Natsume-kun, who was intermingling with those guards, slashes right at Yamada-kun at the first prince’s orders. Natsume-kun’s sword cuts through Yamada-kun’s sword, then the follow-up strike wounds Yamada-kun. Naturally, the sword that Natsume-kun has is one of oni-kun’s best magic swords. No matter how famous a sword Yamada-kun has, it can’t even defend.

Having sustained a wound and being in a bad state of affairs, Yamada-kun faces a critical moment. Being very pleased about that, Natsume-kun starts revealing everything as a final farewell gift. Though saying that, he doesn’t mention the relationship between me and the Divine Word Religion.

Then, with perfect timing to stop things, sensei bursts in. Yamada-kun is saved by a hair’s breadth, then flees. Naturally, for sensei to be able to save Yamada-kun with such timing, is due to me manipulating things behind the scenes. Sensei doesn’t know about that.

「It’s over.」

Just then, vampire girl returned. In her hand, she's taken hold of Potimas's head. Just the head by itself. It seems that he was successfully put to death.

「Thanks for all your hard work.」

When I said so, for some reason the head was presented to me. What? To eat? Well, if you're giving it to me then I'll take it though.

「How's things?」

「The first stage of the farce is over.」

As planned, Yamada-kun has hightailed it out from the castle. There's now one more stage to clear, which is to have him hightail it out from the royal capital. After that is up to Yamada-kun to decide what to do.

Author's note: this covers "S20 - Fall".

Translation notes:

"Oji-sama" - in "Elf Village Battle ⑩", Sophia refers to the pope as "Dustin-oji-sama". Shiro refers to him as an "ojii-sama" (grandfather) at times but Sophia uses "oji-sama" (uncle). Maybe Shiro is mentally adding some age to him because he's a serial reincarnator?

As the author notes, this chapter covers the "behind the scenes" of "S20 - Fall". The word used for "fall" in S20 is similar to that used in the title of this chapter, so I deliberately used "downfall" to keep it similar in the translation.

SS Autumn-Leaf Viewing

「Today's lesson is off-campus studying-g. Let's go do autumn-leaf viewing!」

It began with that abrupt proposal from Oka-chan, or rather Okazaki-sensei. Today's lessons were supposed to be an exception to the norm, with the time set aside for preparing for the imminent cultural festival. However, as there are many people in our class who are in clubs, in order to leave spare time for their club programs, it was decided that our class program would be a simple one. The preparation for that has already been completed. For that reason, our class had almost completely free time for the whole of today. So long as we were in school until the end of the day, it would have been fine whatever we did, or would have been. What destroyed that, was sensei's bombshell announcement. Thus, for some reason our class has left to go autumn-leaf viewing.

「Why are we doing autumn-leaf viewing again?」

Kanata sighs, looking exasperated.

「Now, now. Isn't this sort of thing fine once in awhile?」

Kyouya seems to be unexpectedly enjoying himself, even walking with light steps.

「But seriously. We're high school students now but we're going to the park to play, right? Isn't that like what primary school students do?」

We're currently heading towards a park that's close to the school. It's not as imposing as ones in mountains, but it's a natural park on a small hill, with different plants to see depending upon the season. In spring there's cherry blossoms, in summer there's all kinds, and then in autumn there's the autumn leaves. That's what sensei's purpose is. But, for a bunch of high school students with plenty of energy, there's no chance that it would simply end with quietly watching the autumn leaves. This can be seen from the fact that a soccer ball was brought along. Basically, this is autumn-leaf viewing purely in name only, and is really an excuse to go play in the park. As Kanata said, this isn't a lesson for high school students.

「Well, it's gotta be better than being bored in class with nothing to do.」

In our school there's more programs from club activities than from the classrooms. As such, similarly to our class, there's not an insignificant number of classes that have simple programs so that instead their efforts can be put into their club programs. That being the case, that results in situations like today where there's no work left to do for the class programs. Generally it seems that we would break up in order to work preparing for the club programs, but I think it's fine for us to go play like this as well.

While having such a conversation, we arrived at the park. Walking together in a group with everyone else, we reached a corner of the park that was planted with maple trees. This park is fairly wide. Regarding the "fairly" characteristic, it's wide enough for neighborhood children to come play in, but too narrow to go out of your way to come to, that kind of halfway wideness. Thus, it's not the sort of place that families would visit by car. If there was any who would come by car, it would probably be only those within about 30 minutes of the place. In addition, today is a weekday. Although it is a nice sunny day, there's hardly anybody here. Only at the level of there being a few elderly people scattered about taking walks or jogging. In short, what I'm basically saying is that we almost have the place to ourselves.

「Oh? The leaves have properly turned red.」

Kanata says that while pointing a finger. We had arrived at the corner of the park which has maples planted. But saying that, the number is small enough to be able to count them all. There was some maples whose leaves had turned red.

「I had thought that they'd probably be green still, but they've properly turned red huh.」

As Kyouya said, I had also thought that the season was in a delicate balance. That it was a bit early to see the best of the autumn leaves.

「Muhaha-a. I had properly conducted a preliminary inspection you know-w.」

Sensei, who had been listening to us talking, puffs up her chest with pride. With her childish face and petite build, when sensei makes such a pose, she looks like nothing more than a child with a self-satisfied expression.

「Ooh, nice, nice. You did a great job there.」

Sure enough I guess, but Nanase-san treats sensei like a child by stroking her head. When Nanase-san does such a thing, since she is tall for a girl and has a mature figure, they really do look like an adult and child. Because sensei doesn't seem annoyed by that either, it just adds to the faint sense of it being such a spectacle. Sensei should actually be the older one though, you know.

「Okay then-n. Please use your time freely from now on-n. However-r, please don't do anything like leaving the park or causing trouble for other people okay-y.」

At sensei's words, we begin to disperse. Nobody makes any move to continue the original purpose of autumn-leaf viewing. Well, that's to be expected.

「Alright. All the guys will play soccer!」

Is how Natsume somewhat forcibly invited us to play soccer. I guess he wasn't expecting anyone to refuse, as he immediately turned around, and left for an open space where it'd be possible to play soccer while chatting with Sakurasaki-kun. If we refused here it looks like it would become a problem afterwards. I exchanged glances with Kanata and Kyouya and shrugged my shoulders. It's not like this is the first time that Natsume has been forceful like this. Besides, I personally don't mind playing soccer, so I won't be motivated to strongly oppose him. On following after Natsume to reach the open space, there was some other boys gathered there.

「Huh? Guys from the neighbouring class?」

Kanata said so in a puzzled sounding voice, gazing at the gathered boys. Over there, wasn't just boys from our class, but also those from the neighbouring class.

「Somehow, it seems that the neighbouring class also felt the same way as us. So, now Natsume has proposed a class vs class soccer match.」

From the explanation from Ogi who had come nearby, I understood the situation. It seems that all the classes were thinking the same sort of thing.

「Are there members of the soccer club in that class?」

Kanata asks Ogi that. Ogi is a member of the soccer club after all.

「Three of them. On top of that, one is the ace of our school.」

「Ack.」

「Ogi, you're the only one we can rely on.」

Kanata grimaces. I place a hand on Ogi's shoulder, and grip tightly.

「My position is goalkeeper you know?」

「We're relying on you, guardian angel. Don't let a single shot in.」

「Don't talk crazy!」

Ogi sighs exaggeratedly at my unreasonable request.

「That reminds me, where's the other member of the soccer club in our class?」

Kyouya looks around the area, and discovers the person. He's in the middle of the group with Natsume who is deep in discussion with the guys from the neighbouring class. There, was the figure of Tsushima who, like Ogi, was in the soccer club.

「Ah! Tsushima is a substitute after all.」

To Ogi's unclear words, I also agree in frustration. Tsushima first started playing soccer in high school, so he's can't be said to be skilled. To be honest, it's enough that the likes of Natsume, who was born with good reflexes, might actually be more skilled. In short, there's no boys in our class who are genuinely capable at soccer. Against that, our opponents' class not only has three members of the soccer club, but one of them is the ace of the school.

「We've lost this.」

「Yeah.」

「Why have you given up now!」

While I and Kyouya gave up quickly, Kanata yelled. When all's said and done, this guy hates to lose after all you know.

「Okay you guys! We're going to have a competition with the neighbouring class now! Win this no matter what!」

While we were resigned to it being a lost battle, Natsume came over while

saying that. It somehow seems that Natsume is totally expecting to win. All the guys in our class gather, and we begin a strategy meeting. Saying that though, when a group of amateur high school boys play soccer, all they can do is chase after the ball. Thus, the strategy meeting ended with just a rough decision on the positions. On top of that, since there's as many as 13 of us on our side, those positions were only decided rather vaguely.

「Alrighty! Let's go!」

In response to Natsume's yell of encouragement, we went to our positions. At times like this, Natsume somehow shows some leadership.

In the lawn of the open space in the park, there is more or less a soccer goal. In front of the goal, Ogi is standing as the goalkeeper. Around him are Kyouya, Kogure, Aikawa-kun and Hayashi-kun as four defenders. With the exception of Kyouya, the other three are in the group that has no confidence in their reflexes. To put it bluntly, they're in the group that genuinely don't want to play soccer, I guess. Although Natsume did forcibly say to gather all the boys, amongst them are those that didn't do it. That's why they were assembled as defenders. As defenders, they just have to act as a wall when our opponents attack, and otherwise they can do whatever.

I'm pretty sure that Kyouya has unexpectedly good reflexes, but when it comes to sports like this he prefers unobtrusive positions. I think it's a waste, but since it's Kyouya's own wish I can't say anything.

But well, while thinking such things, the game had started before I noticed. A guy from the neighbouring class whose name I don't know dashed past my side. Oh crap. There's no referee for a start, so it's not like there'd be a whistle blown to begin the game, so it would have been necessary to be paying attention properly to notice the moment it started.

It was my mistake to be looking at what's behind me. I turned around immediately, and gave chase. The opponent is dribbling with the ball, so if I run at full power I should be able to catch up. Or, so I thought, but I couldn't catch up. Though Aikawa-kun is blocking the way in defence, since he's basically just standing there, he's easily passed. Then, a shot at goal is taken. Ogi desperately leaps at it, and somehow saves it. That was close. We almost lost a point right

at the very start.

「Don't mind it.」

「Sure. Was he perhaps our school's ace?」

Tsushima, who's nearby, asks that.

「Did you hear it from Ogi? Yeah, that's the ace.」

I thought so. That wasn't the movements of an amateur. Yeah, well, we're gonna lose badly huh.

Contrary to my expectations, the soccer battle with the neighbouring class ended with a 3-3 draw. Ogi's desperate defense of the goal made a big difference. Without Ogi's miraculous succession of fine saves, I'm sure there would have been a bigger difference in goal count.

Also, one other reason was because the match duration was shorter than I had expected. Since we were playing, we hadn't actually decided on the duration of the match, so I had expected that we would continue playing soccer until we ran out of time. But, a person was wounded, and that naturally led to the match ending. The one who was injured, happened to be Ogi again. He unintentionally received an opponent's shot with his face, and got a nose bleed. Fortunately, it doesn't seem to be serious though, but he's now gone over to where sensei is.

The MVP of this match should definitely be Ogi. We totally depended upon you. I won't forget your gallant figure. But saying that, although it's the case that Ogi stood out amongst our class from beginning to end, that three goals were scored shows just how strong the attacks were. The ones who stood out in offense in our class, were the two forwards of Natsume and Sakurasaki-kun. Despite neither of them belonging to a sports club, their reflexes are just way too good. Showing off those inherent reflexes, they even scored a goal with a counterattack.

The one who scored the second goal was Maki Shuuto. In other words, "shoot". Despite that, he's a member of the baseball club. He also has the stereotypical baseball club close-cropped head.

「Shoot, Shuuto!」

「Shuuto, shoot!」

「Shaddup!」

While such an exchange was going on, Maki fired a shot at the opponent's goal that shook the net. It goes without saying that he did it with a certain sense of desperation. Finally the third goal I'm glad to say, was one that even I was able to be involved with. Since it's not like my reflexes are good, it's rare that I'm able to take on roles like this. The ball that I lofted in from the side was headed in by Natsume. I guess you could say that I assisted Natsume's goal.

「Yamada! Nice one!」

After scoring the goal a smiling Natsume raised his thumb up at me. I can't bring myself to like his arrogant attitude, but guess this side of him is what attracts others to him. I became happy unintentionally.

「Ahh, so tired.」

「Good job.」

Kanata is sitting down on a wooden chair, completely exhausted. Since Kanata was constantly running around chasing after the ball, he's built up that much fatigue it seems. In comparison, Kyouya looks as if nothing had happened. He devoted himself to defense, patiently staying in his position when we went on the attack after all. However, considering the whole match, there were many occasions when our side was under attack, so Kyouya should also have run around a lot accordingly. Despite that he's not even sweating. I think this from time to time, but maybe Kyouya is actually amazing or something? Though I can kind of understand him trying hard not to stand out, I wonder what would happen if this guy really got serious? I'm rather curious.

「Shun, what's with you stealing a march on us and showing off when things were getting good?」

「It's just by chance.」

Kanata is gazing at me with a resentful look. Even if I'm told that, I really don't have anything else to say other than that assist was just by chance.

「Shun, somehow you're always taking just the best bits huh.」

「Ahh. Maybe that's it.」

Even Kyouya is saying it now.

「Hey, have I really been doing such things?」

「In games you're constantly taking the best parts, kinda like you're shrewd, or maybe your timing is good. Even today the girls from the neighboring class were making a fuss.」

「Really?」

「Yeah. Most of the girls in our class and the neighboring class were watching at least.」

Although I had noticed that the girls watching were cheering, were those actually aimed at me as well? If that's the case then it makes me happy, but I think it's likely that rather than me, that those cheers were aimed at Natsume's goal immediately following my shoot.

「Weren't those for Natsume rather than me?」

「Ah, well, I guess the majority were at least.」

When I simply said what I thought, Kanata didn't deny it either. It's sad to say, but compared to my ordinary appearance, Natsume looks pretty cool after all. After having been around him a lot, I doubt he'll be getting a girlfriend with that arrogant attitude of his, but when seen from a distance he definitely is a handsome guy. It's reasonable to appreciate his good looks, according to Hasebe who sits next to me in class. While he might work as the handsome arrogant type in an otome game, it's not like that in real life. Certainly, although he seems to be on good terms with the group of girls centered on Shinohara-san, there's no sense at all that he's going to get a girlfriend. From the point of view of the girls, Natsume seems to be the type where it's fine to be a friend but not anything more. While thinking such things, it's strange to consider that Natsume might be a bit pitiful. Well, it's not like I have any right to say that with my age matching my time without a girlfriend.

「I wish I could have shown off to Wakaba-san too.」

「You haven't given up on Wakaba-san yet?」

Kanata recklessly confessed to Wakaba-san, the most beautiful girl in the whole year or rather the whole school, and was completely rejected in return. He himself knew he had no chance from the beginning, and on the surface it seems

that his feelings weren't hurt, but since he hasn't given up doesn't that prove he's acting as if nothing had happened?

「Well, you know, I've given up completely. But, it's in a man's nature to want to act cool right.」

「Kanata.」

For some reason, Kyouya calls Kanata's name as if rebuking him.

「Well, it's not like Wakaba-san was watching us play soccer anyway!」

As if he was ignoring Kyouya's voice, Kanata laughed it off casually. Besides, while Kyouya frowned with annoyance for a moment, he soon shook his head as if giving up.

「I'm gonna go buy some drinks from a vending machine. Is there anything you want?」

「Okay, some kind of fizzy drink then please.」

「Tea for me.」

「Got it.」

Somehow or other I started feeling uncomfortable, so I left the place as if running away. Or rather, not as if. I did run away.

I don't know what had happened between Kanata and Kyouya regarding Wakaba-san, but it seems that it's more complicated than I had realised. As his friend I want to encourage Kanata with his love, but it looks like he himself isn't serious about it. Perhaps, it's that aspect which has angered Kyouya? At any rate, while he himself isn't ready to open up about his feelings, I guess it's better not to stick my nose in.

While I headed towards the place with the vending machines thinking about such things, speak of the devil, I guess. A bit ahead of me was Wakaba-san, reading a book while sitting down. Since it was in a place with some maples, the view of Wakaba-san reading a book while under a tree decorated with autumn leaves, was like a perfect picture. As if she was from another world.

It seems that I'm not the only one thinking that. There's three figures lurking near Wakaba-san. Shinohara-san, Iijima-san and Tonooka-san. When Shinohara-san confessed to the senpai that she loved, she was refused because he was in

love with Wakaba-san. Out of resentment for that, she started harassing Wakaba-san in minor ways.

It seems that this time she saying something spiteful. I can't hear what she's actually saying, but Shinohara-san's mouth is moving intensely. In the moment when I worried about whether to step in between them or not, Wakaba-san raised her eyes from the book. Being directly stared at, Shinohara-san faltered. However, that was only for an instant, and when she seemed about to say something again, the two behind her calmed her down.

It was clearly written on the faces of Iijima-san and Tonooka-san that they felt it was too risky. Wakaba-san is beautiful. So, being stared at expressionlessly by such a beautiful person, is scary to be honest. Combined with the otherworldly ambiance about her, anyone stared at by her feels a sense of dread. That's also the reason why people keep their distance from Wakaba-san despite her being a beautiful girl.

Shinohara-san was stopped by her two friends, and gave up on what she was about to say in frustration. She left the place looking sullen. Iijima-san and Tonooka-san chased after her looking flustered. The only one remaining was Wakaba-san, who started reading again as if nothing had happened.

So not to be noticed by Wakaba-san, I quietly passed through behind her. Once I couldn't see Wakaba-san anymore, I breathed a sigh of relief. To be honest, I'm bad at dealing with Wakaba-san. Somehow, I can't believe that she's a human like us. It's like she lives in a different world. I don't think I should say this about the person my friend loves, but she's somehow scary. Certainly her appearance is that of an incredibly beautiful girl, but she's always expressionless. However, I feel bad about not being able to do anything when seeing her being bullied. No matter who they are, they should be bad at dealing with bullying. I'm sure if it was Kyouya instead of me, he would have gently stepped in between them. He has quite a strong sense of justice after all.

While having fallen into such self-loathing, I arrived at the vending machines. There was someone there ahead of me, right at the point of taking a can out from a vending machine. I'm proud that I stopped myself from voicing an "ack". Because that's the one person who I'm worse at dealing with than Wakaba-san. Rihoko. Real Horror Girl, or Rihoko for short. I don't know who came up with it,

but that's how she's called. The most isolated person in the class.

Rihoko notices my presence, and after giving me a sullen look she made to leave. I silently watched her leave - or so I had intended.

「Roast potato flavour?」

It was written in big letters on the can that Rihoko was carrying: sweet potato and roast potato flavour. “Unbelievable”, is how I would describe my impression. Certainly roast potato is delicious, but for a can of juice that's hopeless. It'd definitely be disgusting. It's true that occasionally vending machines have seasonal items, but why would you go out of your way to buy one? Because it's autumn? That thought just popped out from my mouth.

「It's unusual, right?」

Hearing my muttering, Rihoko responded that it was unusual. Even though she never makes any attempt to get involved with others - I guess unusual things do happen.

「It's the first time I've seen it.」

Thinking that I should ignore that for now, I decided to respond with something safe.

「I guess it looks disgusting?」

I want to ask, then why did you buy it? I stop myself from doing that, and just smile vaguely.

「When I see something new like this, it unconsciously makes me want to buy it.」

With a pssht sound, Rihoko opens the can and drinks it. Her throat moves and she swallows the liquid inside.

「Yuck!」

So, just because something is new, why do you knowingly buy something that's obviously disgusting?

「Ah well, but it'd be a shame to waste what's left though.」

While I watch her in mute amazement, Rihoko left. Just what was that? I collect my wits together and insert some coins into the vending machine. Then, what comes before my eyes, are both safe things and things that are not. Roast potato flavour, chestnut flavour, persimmon flavour, mackerel flavour...

The last one was ridiculous right? Rihoko, despite all that, you avoided the oddest seasonal item. Just because it's autumn why does the production company try to make such things? I ignore the seasonal type drinks, and buy a cola and tea. Finally, I bought the persimmon flavoured one. When all's said and done, maybe I like to be adventurous as well.

On returning I came back by a different route to avoid Wakaba-san. When I returned, for some reason Hasebe, Furuta and Temarigawa from the girls had gathered, and had attracted some of the boys. When I spoke about the seasonal items at the vending machine, we held a rock-paper-scissors tournament where the loser had to go buy and drink one of them as a penalty, with Kanata being the victim. Kanata dashed off and bought the hazardous materials known as mackerel flavour. Kanata manfully resolved himself to chug it down. You're a good guy.

「Hey, don't kill me.」

「So, what's your impression of it?」

「I'm never drinking it again.」

For some reason the guys passed around the remaining drink that Kanata had left, and eventually everyone drank some. I'll just say that it was absolutely disgusting. The persimmon flavoured drink I bought, had a curious taste. It's not that I couldn't drink it, but it definitely couldn't be called delicious. It was hard to describe my reaction to it another way. We spent the time making noise about such various things and then we headed towards the meeting point. In the end we simply played for just half a day, but maybe doing such things from time to time isn't so bad.

Timeline

History of the Kingdom

Year 798:

- In the Rengzand Empire, Ronant becomes the youngest chief court magician in history.

Year 801:

- Hero Masis dies during a battle at the Kusorion fort.
- Dalthsmeig is inaugurated as the new Hero.

Year 803:

- Due to the great efforts of Hero Dalthsmeig, Demon King Atmos is successfully subjugated.

(Perhaps Waldo K Atmos is related to this previous Demon King Atmos?)

Year 804:

- Hero Dalthsmeig goes missing.

(This is probably due to Potimas working behind the scenes to get the Hero and Demon King to join forces to attack D.)

Year 807:

- In the Rengzand Empire, Sword Emperor Reigar abdicates. Rahgis is enthroned in replacement. Ronant becomes an advisor.

(This should be the same Reigar that Wrath fought in “Sword God vs Ogre”)

Year 829:

- In the Anareich Kingdom, Sirius is enthroned.

(This should be Shun’s father, though in S6 and the same scene in the LN, his name is said to be Magus Delua Anareich. I can’t find any other mention of this name in the WN or LN. Either it’s a mistake on my part, the author’s part or this

is a posthumous name)

Year 832:

- The queen gives birth to first prince Cyris.

Year 833:

- The first princess consort gives birth to first princess Raylecia of the Anareich Kingdom.

Year 834:

- The third princess consort gives birth to second prince Julius of the Anareich Kingdom.

Year 837:

- The second princess consort gives birth to third prince Leston of the Anareich Kingdom.

Year 840:

- Second prince Julius is inaugurated as the Hero.
- This event is treated as confirming the death of Hero Dalthsmeig.
- In the Erlo Great Labyrinth, a peculiar immature Taratekt specimen is sighted. At that time a drake's egg and spider thread is collected, and presented to the royal family.
- There is an increase in activity amongst the demons.

(The death of the previous Hero should coincide with the attack on D, since the Hero and Demon King who did that died in the attempt. Interesting to note that it took 34 years to get to this point - clearly a lot of effort was required.)

Year 841:

- The third princess consort gives birth to fourth prince Shurein of the Anareich Kingdom.
- The queen gives birth to second princess Suelecia of the Anareich Kingdom.
- In the Anabald ducal house, first child Carnatia is born.
- In the Rengzand Empire, first prince Yuugo is born.

- The third princess consort dies.
- In the Elro Great Labyrinth, the Imperial army force led by Ronant makes contact with the “Nightmare of the Labyrinth”.
- Outside the Elro Great Labyrinth, the Nightmare of the Labyrinth and a Queen Taratekt arise.
- Ronant temporarily goes missing.

(The Queen Taratekt also going outside is something that happens in LN4 - it was hunting Kumoko and blasted up the landscape a bit. Suelecia is Sue’s full name - this is the first mention of it.)

Year 842:

- The Nightmare of the Labyrinth arises in the country of Sariera.
- War breaks out between the country of Sariera and the country of Otsu. The Empire as well as the Divine Word Religion support the country of Otsu.
- Hero Julius battles with the Nightmare of the Labyrinth. Due to the intervention of Ronant, he survives.
- Hero Julius temporarily becomes Ronant’s apprentice.
- Human trafficking and kidnappings occur one after the other in all lands.

Year 843:

- In the Elro Great Labyrinth, the “Remnants of the Nightmare” are confirmed to exist.

Year 844:

- The first princess Raylecia is betrothed to the first prince of the Telecent Kingdom, and relocates there to study.

Year 845:

- In the Empire, the “Sword Demon” arises.
- Due to the great efforts of Ronant, the Sword Demon is successfully driven away.

(I can’t find a reference to Wrath being referred to as this, but it’s obviously

him.)

Year 846:

- Led by the Divine Word Religion, decisive action was taken to expose the large-scale human trafficking organisation.

- Jiskan and Hawkin joined Hero Julius's party during that incident.

Year 847:

- Shurein, Suelecia and Carnatia undergo the Appraisal Ceremony.

Year 848:

- From the Earth Drake's egg, Feyrune hatches.

(Feyrune is Shinohara Mirei, as mentioned in the "Autumn-leaf Viewing" special, meaning she is born 7 years after the human reincarnators.)

Year 850:

- The elf leader Potimas visits the country as a goodwill ambassador.

- Potimas's daughter Firimes relocates to the kingdom to study.

- Hero Julius is caught in a trap by the demons and attacked, but it is just barely repulsed.

(This might be the trap mentioned in chapter 259 though if so the timing of that is different by several years in the LN)

Year 851:

- Shurein, Suelecia, Carnatia and Firimes enter the royal academy.

- They make contact with Prince Yuugo of the Empire and Saint candidate Yurin.

- Hero Julius subjugates a Remnant of the Nightmare in the Elro Great Labyrinth.

- Prince Yuugo of the Empire makes an attempt to assassinate Shurein.

- An Earth Drake makes an attack on the academy.

(Julius's fight with one of the Remnants is in LN2. He and his whole party

seriously struggle to beat just one of them and only win with some luck. The drake that attacked the academy is thought to be Feyrune's mother - this incident is only shown in the LN.)

Year 856:

- The Human-Demon Great War.
- Hero Julius dies in battle.
- A coup d'état breaks out in the Anareich Kingdom.
- King Sirius dies.
- Fourth prince Shurein escapes together third prince Leston who was a collaborator.
- The Divine Word Religion announces that Prince Yuugo of the Empire is the new Hero.
- At the same time, it is announced that the Anareich Kingdom's second princess Suelecia is betrothed to him.
- Due to conspiring in the coup d'état in the Kingdom, the Empire declares war on the elves followed by the raising of an army.
- The Empire's Army and the Demon King's Army invade the elf village.

Various aspects of the chronological order

At the end of the fourth volume of the published work is something like a history. By looking at this, you should be able to understand various aspects of the chronological order. Well, there are a few differences between this and the web version though. Thus, in order to make the chronological order of the web version a little bit easier to understand, here is the following explanation:

Kumoko's birth is approximately half a year before the reincarnators are born. Since she's a spider monster, she's born earlier than the humans. Incidentally, oni-kun was also born at a similar time.



The reincarnators are born in various places. This was generally around the time

of the fight with Alaba. If you look very closely, you can see that the summoner laments “why at such a time”. The summoner has also had a child born at this time (a reincarnator), and is lamenting about why he has to take on such a mission when his child has just been born.



Spider-style vampire training. Training vampire girl while heading towards the demon territories. This is before those on Shun-kun’s side enroll at the academy.



Arrival at the demon territory, secret manoeuvres begin. Secret manoeuvres, secretly manoeuvring. This is about the time that those on Shun-kun’s side enter the academy.



Human-Demon Great War. The outbreak of the great war. On Shun-kun’s side, he knows that by becoming the Hero that Julius-nii-sama has died.



The Kingdom is overthrown. Turmoil as Yuugo-kun overthrows the Kingdom. Shun-kun is in deep trouble. For this part, the perspectives from Kumoko’s side hasn’t yet been written.



Elf village battle. Just who is the true mastermind behind this battle? (smirk)

There, that’s basically how the chronological order is. While Kumoko’s point of view has continued in a straight path the whole way through, the point of views from other characters diverges from her path and join around the halfway point, so it becomes rather confusing. Well, I deliberately made it hard to understand though. Right from the beginning of the included Sseries, that was set in the future from Kumoko’s perspective in the chapters at the time. In the chapters being released now the story is thus approaching the Sseries. Currently they’re in-between the Human-Demon Grear War and the overthrowing of the Kingdom. Just when is the story going to catch up to the elf village, I wonder (shudder).

Translation notes:

“Why at such a time” - the summoner doesn’t literally say this but it’s pretty

much what he says in his first line in “The labyrinth’s nightmare ①”. In “The revolving lantern of the summoner” his wife wrote him a letter saying that their daughter had been kidnapped.

“Secret manoeuvres, secretly manoeuvring” - this is chapter 225.

Chapter 285 - No Matter How You Look At It, He's The Heroine

Yamada-kun and co have taken refuge in a hiding place prepared by the third prince. Well, though it's called a hiding place, because I overheard it, it's not hidden at all. I've now arranged for a raid to be made on this hiding place. The one in command of the unit, is Ooshima-kun. I wonder how Yamada-kun will react when he finds out that the person who has always been beside him and supporting him since their previous lives has been brainwashed and is betraying him.

The reason why I've contrived such a tasteless plan, has nothing to do with wanting to bully Yamada-kun. While Natsume-kun seems extremely likely to do such a thing, I'm not that cruel at least. I'm not, okay?

My objective for having Ooshima-kun attack Yamada-kun, is to check the limits of the poorly understood Divine Protection of Heaven skill that Yamada-kun has. Divine Protection of Heaven. That's the inherent skill that Yamada-kun has, which I found out from the brainwashed Ooshima-kun and Hasebe-san. Yamada-kun has talked about his inherent skill to his fellow reincarnators without trying to conceal it, it seems. Because of that I was able to confirm the existence of this skill without difficulty. It seems that the effect of the skill is to make it easier to achieve the desired result regardless of the situation. While many of the skills received as a reincarnation perk are unique skills, even amongst those this is a distinctive skill.

Just from hearing the effects you'd think that this is a cheat-like ability. Taking it to the extreme, it's an opportunistic skill where if Yamada-kun thinks "I want this!", then that could actually happen. Well, it only makes it easier to achieve the desired result though, so it probably doesn't mean that the desired result will be achieved with certainty. If the desired result could be achieved with certainty, then it would exceed a certain dragon from somewhere that grants wishes when seven balls are gathered. That would totally be a cheat-of-cheats. A patch is required. Please update quickly.

Yamada-kun possesses such an opportunistic skill. But, Yamada-kun possesses yet another opportunistic ability on top of that. That is, the Hero title. The Hero title is so that humans can compete with demons on a level playing field, having several opportunistic hidden abilities. In the situation where that generation's Demon King is so overpowering that the balance is broken, as if they were a desperate cornered protagonist, the Hero will gain a power-up.

「There is no way that I can lose here! YAHHHH!!!」

「Impossible! Where have you gotten such power from!?!」

「This is for the sake of saving the world, the power of the Hero!」

Such cliched developments could actually occur, with this. Well, the Demon King is typically selected from the demons after all, and since demons live longer than humans they have higher status values by nature, so naturally it's easy for them to be stronger than the Hero. So the title has a relief measure to keep the balance. It's the Demon Kings who have to suffer from being affected by that. Even though the current Demon King is overpoweringly strong she would still get dragged into this matter. If the Demon King and Yamada-kun fought, then Yamada-kun would definitely gain a super power-up, with this.

The skill's opportunism and the title's opportunism. Yamada-kun possesses these two opportunism inducing factors. His own abilities are nothing special. Yet, with these uncertain factors he could be. Which is why it's necessary to ascertain just to what degree will Yamada-kun's opportunistic factors manifest.

If Ooshima-kun stands in his way, since they had a strong relationship even in their previous lives as well, then Yamada-kun should want Ooshima-kun's brainwashing to be cancelled. Just what will result from that? Based on that I'll estimate just how far Yamada-kun's opportunism will go. Will it be possible to defeat the brainwashing from the broken skill of the Seven Deadly Sins series? If that can actually be done, then it means that Yamada-kun's skill is more troublesome than a Seven Deadly Sins series skill.

Thus, while I'm watching over them, Yamada-kun and Ooshima-kun fought each other.

To summarise the results: normies, go explode. I doubt you understand what I'm saying, but this is my unfiltered impression!

「The heck? I wish they'd just go explode.」

Beside me, vampire girl mutters the same impression as me. Yep. You'd want to say that right?

The result went beyond my expectations. As if anyone could expect this! Amazingly enough, Ooshima-kun threw off Natsume-kun's brainwashing by himself. Even so, without being able to completely remove the power of the brainwashing, he stopped himself by self-destructing. His proficiency as the heroine is incredible! For the sake of the hero, and without concern for injuring himself, he actually self-destructed with all his power!

What followed on from that was also amazing. The self-destructing Ooshima-kun was healed by Yamada-kun. As a side effect of self-destructing, Ooshima-kun completely threw off Natsume-kun's brainwashing and returned to sanity. Yamada-kun made a beautiful retreat while holding Ooshima-kun in a princess carry. "P R I N C E S S C A R R Y ! P R I N C E S S C A R R Y !" Ooshima-kun had a heart-throbbing face expressing that before he fell unconscious. Yeah, he's fallen in love. He's completely fallen in love. No matter how you look at it, he's the heroine. Thank you very much.

Conclusion: this is a rom-com? Er, no, no. Not that. Conclusion: Yamada-kun's skill is quite dangerous. Regarding Ooshima-kun throwing off the brainwashing - while his strength of will and so on might have been part of it, I can't believe that was enough to create such a dramatic development by itself. There should have been some influence from Yamada-kun's skill. Considering that, it means that Yamada-kun's skill is more troublesome than the Seven Deadly Sins series skills.

However, the third prince who stayed behind as the rear guard to allow Yamada-kun to escape was able to be captured without any problems. If everything had gone according to Yamada-kun's wishes, then it would be strange for the third prince to not be able to escape as well. Which means that there's also limits to Yamada-kun's skill. Maybe there's no influence unless Yamada-kun is nearby, for example. Hmm-mm. It's hard to see the influence of the effect itself - I have absolutely no idea how far the power of Yamada-kun's skill goes. I'll be vigilant about it, but it might be hard to deal with it.

At any rate, isn't the Ruler skill that Yamada-kun possesses breaking the rules? The healing that Yamada-kun performed on Ooshima-kun wasn't any ordinary healing. After all, even if it was just for an instant, Ooshima-kun was dead. Ordinary healing magic will never be able to revive the dead. What made that possible, was the Ruler skill of Kindness that Yamada-kun possesses. The effect of that is resurrection from death. Using that power, Yamada-kun was able to revive Ooshima-kun who had died from self-destruction.

To be honest, I panicked a bit when Ooshima-kun self-destructed. That was clearly a fatal wound after all. Unsurprisingly, Ooshima-kun then died. If Yamada-kun had been even a second slower in applying resurrection, I would probably have rushed over there with teleportation. The moment that Ooshima-kun self-destructed, I had unconsciously stood up as well. Even though I knew that Yamada-kun possessed Kindness, I still panicked a bit.

However, this might be a chance instead. As compensation for using the Kindness skill, the level of Taboo rises. The Kindness skill makes resurrection from death possible, something virtually impossible to do within the System of this world. However, by continuing to revive the dead, what lies ahead is Taboo, which informs you about the truth of the System. Once he knows that, there's no way he wouldn't realise just what it means to resurrect the dead.

D's work is as nasty as ever. It could fucking break one's heart. However, I shall make use of that.

I'll lay bait for Yamada-kun and cause people to die before his eyes. Yamada-kun would surely then perform resurrection of the dead. Which will cause his Taboo level to rise. Then when Taboo reaches the maximum, it will result in Yamada-kun learning about the other side of this world.

When that happens, Yamada-kun will be forced to choose. Whether to oppose us. Or otherwise, whether to join forces with us. Well, it's also possible that he'll choose to turn a blind eye to it all. The fate of the world is such a heavy responsibility that a normal person would not be able to shoulder it.

If he decides to oppose us, then I'll crush him with all my might. However, I don't think Yamada-kun will be able to do that. After all, he's from an ordinary background. Although he actually became the Hero, originally he was an

ordinary boy you could find anywhere. Which is why he surely wouldn't be able to shoulder the fate of the world. I'll have him learn the truth as soon as possible and induce him to stand down.

Author's note: This covers "K2 The last obstinacy of a man".

Translation notes:

"No matter how you look at it, he's the heroine" - the use of "he" is intentional. In Japanese third person pronouns (such as "he" or "him") are generally not used but it's more or less unavoidable in English. So when Shiro has a line like the title or "he stopped himself by self-destructing" when referring to Ooshima-kun, it's actually gender neutral in Japanese even though "Ooshima-kun" is currently Katia, ie female. I'm using male pronouns in the translation because Shiro uses -kun, which somewhat implies that the person being referred to is male. This does get a bit odd when Shiro also refers to Ooshima-kun as the "heroine" (ie being like the female lead character in a story), but please endure this for now. Maybe Shiro will change how she refers to Ooshima-kun, in which case I'll probably use female pronouns in the translation.

"normies, go explode" - this is similar to the "Death to Normies" phrase that came up in the 2015 Christmas special. It's more or less a literal translation of the phrase リア充爆発しろ.

"For the sake of the hero" - here, "hero" is deliberately not capitalised. It's not referring to the Hero title that Shun has but as if Shun was a character in a story. ie Shun would be the "hero" (the main male character) and Katia / Ooshima-kun would be the "heroine" (the main female character and typically the love interest).

Chapter 286 - Boldly Marching Through Enemy Territory

After the disturbance in the Kingdom, what followed was the large scale task to enable the Demon King's Army to march towards the elf village. Since the elf village is in the human territories, to march there basically means for the Demon King's Army to pass through the human territories. Normally it wouldn't be possible to get that far. After all, for a long time the demons had been prevented from crossing the border to Empire. Well, there's a reason for the demons deliberately stopping there as well though.

However, this time is different. Many of the forts protecting the Empire's border have fallen for a start, making it practical to pass through. Even without that, by using Natsume-kun and vampire girl to seize hold of the inner workings of the Empire, there'll be no problems so long as we can adequately fool the citizens.

By borrowing in advance things like Imperial Army uniforms and banners, the Demon King's Army could be disguised as the Imperial Army. Well, we don't have enough to equip the entire army with that though, so by having some conspicuous officers and so on be like that, at a glance nobody would realise that it was the Demon King's Army. Even though they're called "demons", their appearance isn't any different to humans after all. Just changing their clothing is enough to avoid suspicion.

Normally, members of the Divine Word Religion's inquisition that have the Appraisal skill would be keeping watch everywhere, with the duty of discovering any demons who were trying to sneak in, but even they are acting more like collaborators this time. Even though they know who we are they're just letting us through. Likewise with the Empire's intelligence units.

Consequently, despite us being the Demon King's Army, we were able to boldly walk through the human territories with complete success. The ones we've taken with us this time, are the 3rd Army lead by Mera, the 8th Army

lead by oni-kun and the 10th Army lead by me. Just those three armies. Even the Imperial Guardsmen under direct control of the Demon King have been left in the demon territories along with Balto. That being said, even with just the soldiers from the three armies, we probably have more than enough forces. Just one army has enough strength to completely trample over a small human country. And we have three.

With such armies, attempting to secretly travel through would be fundamentally impossible. In which case it's better to just go boldly instead. By coming through so boldly, even if anyone thought something was a bit off they would just consider it to be how things are instead. All the more so since the two great powers of the Divine Word Religion and the Empire are declaring us to be an allied army. Well, I've left making the necessary arrangements of all that to the pope so there shouldn't be any problems.

I dunno what kind of negotiations the pope carried out to do it, but our army that entered the Empire's territory is being allowed to transfer to a small country close to the elf village, by using a huge teleportation ring that the armies within the Empire use to allow them to teleport around. Even though it called a huge teleportation ring, it's not able to teleport such large numbers of people at once. Thus, it means moving by splitting into smaller groups to teleport repetitively. That takes quite a lot of time as well. The fastest way would be if I teleported everyone together in one go, but if I did that my energy would be drastically reduced so I don't want to. Besides, there's no problem if it takes time either.

Since the situation has come this far already, it's like water flowing from a high place to a lower place. It's not something that can be stopped. At least, not unless it was by an existence like D who is able to rewrite the scene from scratch. The only ones capable of doing that in this world are Kuro and I alone. Since the two of us are leading the strategy for this, there's no way to rewrite it. Therefore there's no particular problem if it takes time. The only difference is whether the result comes sooner or later.

I gaze at the queue of people teleporting in groups. Because there's too many people considering the width of the road, the length of the queue has become tremendous. The head of the queue is clearly too far to be visible with normal

eyesight. At the head is the 4th Army lead by Mera. As might be expected from them being a regular army that was commanded by Balto originally, their appearance is very normal. Following on behind them is the 8th Army lead by Oni-kun. Since they were a mish-mashed group originally, there are lots of irregularities in their equipment. They have a strong impression of being unorganised compared to the uniformness of the other armies, perhaps looking like a gathering of mercenaries. Finally, at the end of the queue is the 10th Army lead by me. Though we have the least members, we stand out the most. After all, every last one of the soldiers are wearing white clothing. To put it in a word - bizarre. Well, it's my fault though!

Even with such a bizarre group, by flying the Empire's flag, even though they get some suspicious looks they won't be attacked. Since the locals were informed about the army coming through beforehand, they're understanding. There's children waving at the soldiers marching through and so on.

In the end, saying whether someone is a demon or is a human only amounts to this. If people didn't know who was who, then they wouldn't be conflicts. Even though they have historical reasons for their conflict and even though they have an obligation to fight, it's still the case that if they didn't know that they wouldn't have any reasons to have a conflict. In a sense, if they didn't know they might be happier. Someone might say that ignorance is a sin though.

「Shiro-chan, are you okay?」

A certain person who would be at the top of the list to say such a thing is worried about me. Currently the Demon King and I, and incidentally vampire girl too, are riding in an elegant carriage. However, I feel absolutely terrible. Do I look okay? Are we merely on a trip to discover the truth behind the conflict?

It's wrong to throw natural loners like me into a crowd of people. It's nauseating. Waves of people are nauseating. Ugh, I feel bad. Even within this carriage I can feel the presence of great numbers of people. Why are there so many people? Maybe I should decrease them a bit? Better to decrease them sooner rather than later, right? Shall I do it?

「Hey, you're not thinking of something bad are you? Don't do it, okay?」

Ughhh. At least once the battle starts I'll be able to switch over and endure it,

but like now where I have to just sit quietly while moving it's painful. It's not good for people to gather like this. Why do people form groups like this? Being alone is fine. Rather, seriously please let me be alone.

Ah! I sense from one of my clones that Yamada-kun has taken the bait! Now's not the time to be like this! I gotta leave so that I can observe! This has nothing to do with this crowd of people being painful and wanting to get away from them! This is for a perfectly valid job okay!

「Consequently, I'm going out.」
「Shiro-chan, only an esper would be able to make sense of so few words you know? Consequently from what?」

I ignore the strangely frustrated Demon King and teleport. Phew. Finally I can breathe again.

Author's note: This is the last update of the year. Everyone, have a good New Year.

Translation notes:

“rewrite the scene from scratch” - this is a fairly literal translation. Shiro is describing the situation as if it was a setting in a play/story. Perhaps it's like saying “a character within the story cannot undo the situation - only someone who can fundamentally change the story itself could do that”.

Regarding the word “demon” used in this series - 魔族 (mazoku). Here, it's more of a label than a technical description. In other series, it might be used to accurately refer to demonic beings (inhabitants of hell) or magical beings (inhabitants of the spirit world). Currently, there doesn't seem to be any particular justification for those being accurate translations of the word, so it would be interesting to know the origins of the word within this world. In general, you could say that it's a word without a clear meaning, which allows authors to play with it a bit. For reference, in the Kono Suba series, the word used for the crimson magic clan (紅魔族) is “crimson + mazoku”, which is why they've sometimes been translated as “crimson demons”.

“top of the list to say such a thing” - top of the list to say that “ignorance is a sin”.

Ss - New Year's Eve Soba

Author's note:

Happy New Year. Certainly I said in the update last year that it was “last update of the year”! The reason: there's people who would see that who wouldn't read it right at the start of the new year on the 31st.

「Toshikoshi soba, huh.」

Vampire girl's voice sounds exasperated. I ignore that, slurping the noodles in my bowl. Sitting next to me, the Demon King is also slurping noodles. Though, it seems she's not able to slurp the noodles well and is struggling hard. Japanese people are practiced at it, but I've also heard that foreigners are surprisingly unable to slurp them. For the Demon King who possesses Gluttony to be like that is rather too surprising though.

「It's just something similar to soba though. It's a bit different to soba, but it's quite tasty.」

Oni-kun talks about his impressions of the soba. Indeed, this soba, isn't really soba. They might look like noodles that were imitating soba, but they're not actually soba itself. After all, soba doesn't grow naturally in this world for a start. What we're currently eating is pseudo-soba that was developed through repeating various experiments until finally something like it was produced. Using my position as army commander to the max and embezzling from the army budget, I sunk money into developing this. Eh? It's a crime? It's fine, it's fine. As long as it's not exposed then it's no big deal!

「I'm not talking about that aspect, rather than toshikoshi soba, isn't this wanko soba?」

The moment I've finished eating the noodles in my bowl, a member of the 10th Army in white clothing quickly refills the bowl with additional soba. Wonderful! Perfect timing! All that training was worthwhile.

「Well, it's still soba either way. Maybe in some regions it could be the case that the locals ate wanko soba for New Year's Eve?」

「At my place we had normal soba.」

Vampire girl continues to voice complaints while slurping the soba. Behind her Mera is waiting in reserve, ready for the moment to replace the soba held in one hand. Mera should just eat too.

Thus, the cooks in the kitchen in front of us desperately continued to cook the noodles with agonising cries like it was a scene of hell. We've got the Demon King of Gluttony here after all. So naturally we gotta have a huge amount of noodles. I pretend not to see that the great pile of bowls stacked up in front of the Demon King exceeds those before me as well.

「By the way, Shiro-chan.」

The Demon King talks while munching the noodles, having given up on slurping them. You mustn't talk while eating!

「Where did the budget for this come from?」

Gulp! So as not to expose the trembling within my heart, I slurp noodles. The bowl that had become empty, is refilled again with awesome timing.

「It's so strange. I get the feeling that Shiro-chan's personal assets wouldn't be enough to cover this amount. Not even the cost of the materials.」

Chew, chew. Slurp, slurp.

「We're eating together therefore you're accomplices.」

「Ah, that's dirty!」

Kukuku. As soon as we ate together the Demon King, vampire girl and oni-kun were all accomplices! You've lost the right to condemn me! Hah-hah-hah-hah!

「I'll report this to Balto later.」

Sorry Balto. It's possible that another direct attack to your stomach has already been decided. But despite that my chopsticks won't stop!

Author's note: best regards for this year too.

Translation notes:

“Kukuku” - an evil laugh.

Chapter 287 - This Jijii Is Somewhat Unfathomable

I've come to the royal castle in the Kingdom. I took up position in a vacant room secretly, so that the humans within the castle wouldn't notice. Well, there's only a limited number of people within the castle currently, so it would be fine even if I wasn't so sensitive about it though.

I had already used Natsume-kun to clear out people from the castle beforehand. Whether it's the Kingdom's crown prince or queen or whatever, they've been temporarily evicted, leaving it in a mostly empty condition. And so, Natsume-kun has been able to prepare a suitable defense force of his own choosing. Well, since the objective this time is to make Yamada-kun resurrect the dead, it's not the case that we need to prepare for a proper defensive battle though.

Erm? That was the case, right? Doesn't there appear to be someone real familiar looking here? Unless I'm mistaken, the strongest person in the Empire is here though. Yep. No matter how I look at him, the jijii over there is someone I've seen on several occasions. The first time I saw that jijii was in the upper layer of the Elro Great Labyrinth. He was together with those fucking knights who burnt My Home to the ground. Then afterwards, don't ask me why but he came to apply for an apprenticeship and so on. Ahh, so nostalgic. At that time he was a real oddball ossan, but in the years since then he's had a class change to being a jijii.

Hmm-mm. That jijii was the one who shot and killed the shota of the 6th Army in the Great War, right. It should be obvious that he's currently the strongest person in the Empire, so why is he here? Huhhhh? Natsume-kuuun? This isn't according to plan, surely?

Oh boy. Isn't this is plainly bad? After all, isn't that jijii is stronger than Yamada-kun, basically? What to do.

Ah well, whatever. There's no way that Yamada-kun is going to die anyway. In

the worst case he would simply retreat, surely. It's not like this is a particularly important operation anyway.

If Yamada-kun is unable to get past the jijii then the third prince and other hostages will die. If Yamada-kun does get past the jijii, then providing that he also resurrects the dead quickly enough then the hostages will be saved. Even so, that's only so long as resurrecting the dead causes Potimas's parasitic soul to be torn off though.

The third prince has Potimas's soul attached to him. The thing that Potimas had set up amongst the leaders of the Kingdom. Those such leaders of the Kingdom have already been purged, aside from the third prince. While this does mean that I still don't know what Potimas had wanted to do with the Kingdom in the end, rather than letting him do whatever he likes, I would rather clean things up with a big purge. Thus, taking advantage of the disturbance in the Kingdom they were all killed off, but then I suddenly had an idea on seeing Yamada-kun resurrect Ooshima-kun. The idea that maybe by dying once could Potimas's soul be ripped off? After all, once you're dead it's the end. With regards to the System, no matter what, once you're dead the soul is pruned of everything that's unnecessary. In which case, Potimas's parasitic soul should also be pruned off.

But well, I can't say anything for sure without actually carrying out an experiment. Yamada-kun's resurrection of the dead seems to call back the soul before it's completely taken away by the System. I think it probably wouldn't succeed unless the resurrection is performed before the pruning work begins. So, Potimas's soul might also be resurrected without any pruning being done. Well, if that happens I'll just have to get rid of them again. The fate of the third prince depends upon Yamada-kun's resurrection. He might not even get far enough to try that unless he can get past the jijii though!

Really, what the heck is the jijii doing here? This is Natsume-kun's miscasting right. All he had to do was prepare a reasonably decent force, so why's he deploying the greatest force within the Empire I wonder. Does he hate Yamada-kun that much?

That Yamada-kun is currently approaching rapidly, riding on a drake. Riiding ooon a siiilver... ah, I better stop there else it'll be dangerous. Or rather, I'm

impressed that he's invading by riding on a drake at high altitude. While I can also fly around the sky at will you know, perhaps because I experienced diving into those deep shafts in the Elro Great Labyrinth I'm not really good with heights. If it's necessary I can also fly up into the sky, but I don't think I would want to fly too high up. It's best for humans to have their feet on the ground. Not that I'm human though.

Now then, how is the jijii going to take on Yamada-kun? Answer: anti-aircraft fire. O, oookay. Jijii, you're unreal. He shot directly at Yamada-kun's group despite them flying at such high altitude that they would barely be visible with the naked eye.

Just reaching that far is amazing. The effective range of magic depends on the strength of the practitioner's magic offensive ability, and also how much MP they decided to invest. Also, just how well they have properly mastered casting magic. Simply activating magic while depending entirely upon the skills is no good. It is absolutely necessary to precisely grasp the flow of the activated magic and understand where to invest extra MP. In that regard, the jijii has considerable understanding it seems. Based on status values I remember the jijii having, there's no way his magic would reach so far. For him to be able to do that means that he must have packed in a considerable amount of extra MP. That ossan who once came to apprentice to me has grown so splendidly. It's not like I actually made him my apprentice, but somehow I'm feeling rather touched.

But, well, after travelling such a long distance the strength of the attack weakens. The magic flying towards Yamada-kun is easily intercepted and countered. Or rather, it's amazing that it was countered by Yamada-kun's magic, even though he's technically the Hero. Still, despite Yamada-kun and co trying to take covert action it was easily seen through. Jijii, just what are you. Is he really human, this jijii? The pope for one this jijii for another, aren't the old men amongst the humans quite suspicious somehow? Like, I wouldn't be surprised if I was told that human old men were actually a different species you know?

Or rather, this is bad. Isn't he seriously trying to shoot down Yamada-kun?

[Ah, damn. I can't win this.]

[Hey!? Master!?!]

[I quit, I quit. We're retreating.]

My concerns were betrayed by the jijii himself. He said what were apparently complaints by telepathy to all the people who appear to be his pupils, then activated a group teleportation. They've teleported somewhere.

My mouth is agape. Eh, why did he withdraw then? It seems that I'm not the only one who can't follow the situation - Yamada-kun's group is also perplexed. Well, I guess?

But still, jijii, if you had continued like that you would have won, right? Since you have enough ability to do a group teleportation without effort. Going by my memory, during the encounter at the Elro Great Labyrinth I think you needed quite a lot of time to be able to activate a group teleportation. In the ten-something years since then, it seems he's improved his skills considerably. With those skills he should have been able to even take on the Hero and his entire group.

Just why did he withdraw? He's unfathomable. Well, it's fine though since it's convenient for me. I don't feel satisfied somehow though.

Reference data:

Ronant at the time of "P, please wait!" : status values of 1500 in magic types, 300 in physical types.

Ronant at the time of the elf village war: status values of 4000 in magic types, 400 in physical types.

I published this before as well, but since it's important here it is again. This jijii, he's grown too much.

Translation notes:

"Class change" - this is typically RPG *gamer lingo for changing from one type* profession of character to another. Shiro is basically saying that he's changed a lot (from a "middle-aged man" to an "old man") but using some unusual terms to describe it.

"Riiding ooon a siiilver..." - is from the title (and chorus) of a song by Nakajima Miyuki from 2003 that's considered to be a classic. The full title is

“riding on a silver dragon” (銀の龍の背に乗って). Shiro pretty much only sings the first word and basically stops because of copyright issues.

The action and telepathic talk here is from “The royal capital battle ③”.

“My mouth is agape” - Shiro actually just says poka-n, which is the sound effect for this. It’s unclear but given her personality this is probably what she feels rather than what she’s showing on her face.

“I published this before” - this was previously published in Before The Human-Demon Great War - The situation of Ronant.

Chapter 288 - Guardian

As I secretly watch over them, the resurrection of the third prince and co is completed. This sure has been trivialised, even though it's literally a matter of life and death for people. The power of gods that can even control life and death has been demonstrated. Feeling as if I've been shown a fragment of D's outrageous power, somehow I feel restless.

It's not like I can't resurrect the dead myself either. However, that's a situation limited only to this world where the "System" exists. The power is limited precisely because the very concept of life and death in this world differs to other worlds, making it possible to use it here. No matter how hard I tried, there's no way I could resurrect the dead on a world without the System. That potential is something that is entirely concocted by D. Before I became a god, though I couldn't see the upper limits of that power, even since becoming a god I can't see the depths of that power either. It's frankly terrifying.

Even though it is the work of a miracle, Yamada-kun only has to pay a minor compensation to use it. He doesn't appreciate just how extraordinary a thing he is doing. Merely with the compensation of an increase in the level of Taboo, an act of god can be performed. In the first place, if it was possible to bring people back to life so trivially, then I wouldn't be so attached to life either.

Hmm. Since it would have been problematic if Yamada-kun's MP had ran out, I'd limited it to three people, but perhaps I should have increased the number of people a bit? Looking at the situation, it certainly seems that Yamada-kun has yet to max Taboo anyway. Well, his Taboo level should have gone up by 3 at least, so it's not like it's been futile. Besides, getting Yamada-kun to max Taboo would have been something like a bonus anyway. Or rather, this whole thing has been like a bonus I guess. Even if it had failed I wouldn't have been particularly bothered about it. I was able to carry out my other objective you see.

I take a good look at the third prince's soul, now that he's been resurrected. Yep. Potimas's soul has been torn off. I'm satisfied just to know that it's possible

to separate from Potimas by dying once.

I've already accomplished my objective, so all that remains is to see that Yamada-kun and co safely escape. Will I then be thrown back into that huge mass of people again? No thanks. Let's hang out here a bit longer. Yes, let's do that.

「Shun, just in case, please check the status of the teleportation ring. It's probably already destroyed and can't be activated though. I'll stay here and observe the condition of Leston and the other two.」

「I understand.」

It seems that Yamada-kun is going to check the status of the teleportation ring. The teleportation rings are one of the major means of travel in this world. Since you can cross between continents in an instant, it's rather handy eh. If you wanted to cross between continents without using a teleportation ring, there's no other options except to cross the ocean infested with water dragons, or to go through the Elro Great Labyrinth. The ocean is impossibly hard so in practice the Elro Great Labyrinth is the only way.

Yamada-kun and co are headed towards the teleportation ring to check it. Of course the teleportation ring has already been fully destroyed by Natsume-kun's order. Naturally, I have no intention of letting them cross between continents so easily. Well, since such a thing was proposed "just in case", I guess they wanted to be able to move about more freely.

The door to the room I'm in opens. To not even knock, he sure has no manners eh.

「You sure are getting up to some nasty hobbies.」

On top of that, that's the first thing he says on entering. He's pissed off? I guess so. As proof of that, the way he flumps down onto a chair facing where I'm sitting, is carelessly rough.

「You made Ronant-sama, who was Julius's teacher, fight Shun who is Julius's younger brother. While it made for a dramatic development, try putting yourself in his place. Can't you damn well understand the feelings of Ronant-sama as he chose to withdraw?」

Not much point in asking me. It's not like I was the one who arranged for that jijii to be here anyway. For the sake of declaring my intention to not accept his protest, I ignore him and drink some tea.

「It's hardly humane you know.」

Ah, don't go there. I'm not human now nor ever have been okay. However, being spoken of like I'm some monstrous fiend is hardly pleasant.

「That's not very god-like, Kuro.」

So I retorted back. Against the clone of Kuro sitting opposite me, who goes by the name of Hyrinth.

「I guess so. I think so myself, in that regard. A beginner you damn well may be but you're much more god-like.」

Saying so, Kuro sighed deeply.

「I understand it though. That whatever I say about this matter it's just venting my anger. I do appreciate that you lot are trying to do your best with your chosen path. However, even so, even so, these feelings are hard to contain.」

He laments. Well, considering he had to let the previous Hero Julius die when he was like a childhood friend to him, and watch Julius's younger brother go through various bitter experiences on top of that, I'm sure anyone would feel ashamed. But hey, it's no concern of mine though. I've got absolutely no concern for what this guy's saying when at the same time that he's administering this world, he's also been running around accompanying the Hero pretending to be a champion of justice.

「Detachment due to resurrection confirmed.」

Therefore, I'll ignore those feelings of Kuro and settle things with a report on practical matters.

「I see. If the detachment had not occurred then it would have been necessary to end his life again, so that is fortuitous.」

He shows an expression of relief from the bottom of his heart. After all, as Hyrinth he had a considerable amount of contact with the third prince. It's to be expected that he would have wanted the guy to survive if at all possible. It's not

like I want to pointlessly kill either, so this helps me too.

「That being the case, it might have been better to resurrect the king.」

However, I wasn't able to endorse his next words. That has the same meaning of wanting to save every human who could be saved. It's not like you could even do it.

「I understand. You want to say that I'm being overly supportive of one side, right? I've entrusted every damn thing to you lot. So I don't intend to interfere with how you do things.」

「Good.」

You were totally complaining just a moment ago though! I'll forget about it. Be grateful that I'm so kind.

「Next is, the elf village huh.」

Indeed, indeed. We're currently moving there. Ah, I just recalled something unpleasant. Do I really have to return to that huge crowd of people? Can't I be allowed to waste some time somewhere until the movement is complete?

「Since this is you lot I'm talking about, I'm not going to worry. However, he hasn't been living for such a long time just for show either. Don't be careless.」

Not exactly a warning I can appreciate. I know all too well that's the case. We're prepared for any eventuality, so there's not even a one in a million chance we could lose. The only difference will be whether we take heavy damage or light damage.

「Shun and co will be returning soon. I'll excuse myself here.」

Saying so, Kuro left the room.

So long as that man protects Yamada-kun and the rest, unexpected situations will be impossible. Precisely because of that, I can have peace of mind. There is absolutely no chance that Yamada-kun and the others could die. Even if they did, if that man gets serious then he would even be able to resurrect them, like how I could.

The man called Hyrinth is a clone of Kuro. To be more precise, a being who was a stillborn son of a noble from the Kingdom who had a part of Kuro's soul

implanted into the body. While the soul was that of a god, since the body was that of a human, his status values as he grew to adulthood reflected that. Well, since he can use a fragment of Kuro's power due to the soul connection, if he gets serious then he could make use of his power as a god. Since his body is that of a human with no connection to Kuro whatsoever, his appearance doesn't bear the slightest resemblance to Kuro. From time to time Kuro creates clones like this, and it seems he takes actions that intermingle with human society. I have no idea what his objective is. It's probably just killing time, or immersing himself with the sentiment of intermingling with the people of this world perhaps - the sorts of things I consider to be far removed from being practical. After all, he has no need to administer this world at all. Therefore he plays around.

However, even if he's playing around his emotions still get affected. Since he and Julius were close friends, they shared their joys and sorrows. Then Julius was killed by me. I'm sure Kuro had complicated feelings about that. Even though he could logically accept that it was something that was absolutely necessary no matter what.

I guess that's why. The reason why he's so concerned about Yamada-kun. I guess he believes it's atonement or something. In regards for letting his elder brother die. I guess that's also why he's gotten overprotective to the extent that he'll come to me to complain a bit, like just now.

But still, people's feelings eh. Did that jijii deliberately declare "I can't win" and withdraw because he was facing his apprentice's little brother then? That jijii actually had such sentiments as well then huh. I see.

.....Well, there's no need to consider people's feelings though. I will only do what I need to do for myself. Consequently, I have to return. To the middle of that crowd of people.

.....Suddenly, I want to resign from doing what I need to do.

Translation notes:

"Guardian" - the Japanese word used here is the same as the name of the skill that has appeared before. This is "guardian" in the sense of "one who defends

others”.

To be clear, when Hyrinth tells Shun to go check the teleportation ring, Hyrinth is supposedly staying back and watching over the three who were just resurrected, while the rest went with Shun. Hyrinth takes this opportunity to go visit Shiro. The conversation between Hyrinth and Shun is not from a previous chapter. Hyrinth’s speech style here is very similar to Kuro’s, though not identical - I guess he refers to Ronant as “Ronant-sama” due to being Hyrinth and not Kuro - in the chapter before the Great War, Hyrinth uses “Ronant-sama”. He tends to refer to Shiro as “kisama”, which is a very rude way of saying “you”, but it’s hard to convey this. Imagine him as having a slightly old style of speech and a lot of frustrations.

“The ocean is impossibly hard” - Shiro actually calls it a “無理ゲー”, or “impossibly hard video game”.

“not even a one in a million chance” - literally this is “not even a one in 10,000 chance” in the raw but the meanings are pretty much equivalent.

Ss - Valentine

Author's note: It's late, but here's a Valentine's Day short story. It's an anecdote that's unrelated to the main story.

『Happy Valentine's Day. This is friendship chocolate. I put all my effort into creating it so please eat it. From D.』

On waking up early, I found a box with cute wrapping placed beside me. Since I sleep in a simple Home to ensure my personal safety, how could something be placed beside me without me noticing? Since I have confidence in my Home it wounded my pride, but I consent to it when I read the name of the sender written on the card that was placed together with the box. If it's that jerk then it can't be helped.

Even so, chocolate huh? I guess even that great Evil God can do something good once in awhile eh. I love sweet things you know? On top of that, chocolate doesn't exist here so I'm mega happy about this. Let's eat it at once then.

Opens

「Mah ahh ahh ahh ahhh!!」

Closes

.....What, was that? Was I seeing a hallucination, or on opening the box did I really see some mysterious brown gloopy creature that was crying in a strange voice? That was chocolate? Was chocolate actually something that would cause you to doubt your own sanity just from looking at it...? I'll open the box again and confirm. Yeah. It's possible that my eyes had temporarily gone strange I guess.

Opens

「Mah ahh ahh ahh ahhh!!」

Closes

What am I supposed to do with this. Eat it?

「So why have you brought this to me then?」

「Mah ahh ahh ahh ahhh!!」

「Eat it.」

「.....I refuse.」

「Mah ahh ahh ahh ahhh!!」

I've come to Kuro's place. Tossing something a god made to another god is the correct way to handle the problem. Thus I've come to try to force it on to Kuro, but it's proving difficult to get him to accept it. Watch this, won't he seem likely to want to accept it if I push it hard enough? If you look closely, doesn't it have a certain charm to it? So there, accept it! You'll be able to get chocolate from a girl on Valentine's Day! You'll definitely be treated with envious gazes from all the boys. If you don't accept it then wouldn't that be an insult to Valentine's Day!?

There is a seesaw battle between me who is trying to force it on him and Kuro who obstinately refused to accept it. After that continued for twenty minutes, Kuro reaches for the creature as if resigned. Oh? Finally he has given up and feels like accepting it huh! I see, I see. Please take care of it forevermore.

He firmly grasps the creature with his right hand, and firmly grasps my chin with his left hand. Hm? Then he uses that hand to forcibly open my mouth, and forcibly tosses the creature inside.

「Mah ahh ahh ahh ahhh...」

The creature screams while disappearing deep into my mouth. Oh no, I ate it on reflex! What the heck is this!? It tastes like normal chocolate, dammit!

「D is a troublemaker as well.」

「Mah ahh ahh ahH!? Ahhh...」

「Just what is this thing?」

「Can you not tell by looking?」

「I am asking because I cannot.」

After stabbing the object making a strange voice with a spoon, the Japanese style beauty in maid clothes asks D, who has brought it to her mouth.

「It's chocolate.」

「Chocolate does not emit strange voices.」

「That is merely prejudice. Will you eat it? It's delicious, okay?」

「Even if it is delicious I do not want to eat something so strange.」

「It's so delicious though.」

「More importantly, why did you neglect your work to make such a thing? Surely you can give me an acceptable reason?」

「I thought that I must do it because it's Valentine's Day. I will neither repent nor regret it.」

As for what happened to D after that, nobody knows.

Translation notes:

“Friendship chocolate” - in modern Japan, it's traditional for girls to give other people chocolate on Valentine's Day. This can be “giri-choco” (obligation chocolate, given to family and people who've helped you), “tomo-choco” (friendship chocolate, given to friends) and “honmei-choco” (true feeling chocolate, often homemade, given to your true love). It's perfectly normal for girls to give other girls “friendship chocolate”.

“Placed beside me” - this could also be translated as “placed beside my pillow” or “placed beside by bed” but since Shiro seems to be sleeping in a “Home” (ie cocoon of threads) it's not clear what else is there.

“Cause you to doubt your own sanity” - more literally “cause you to perform a Sanity Check”, referring to the Call of Cthulhu: Dark Corners of the Earth game, where seeing disturbing scenes can cause you to lose your sanity.

Chapter 289 - TAS

Wow. Yamada-kun is totally going for it. He's more aggressive than I had expected. Shockingly so.

As for what happened, Yamada-kun's party arrived at the elf village before our Demon King's Army - they got ahead of us, basically. Like, I don't really get it. After all, the Kingdom that Yamada-kun was in is in a different continent to the elf village, you know? Just moving around should be pretty time consuming, especially now when Yamada-kun and co are currently on the international wanted list for being the masterminds behind the coup d'état in the Kingdom. In a situation where normally you wouldn't be able to move, taking the quick decision of "let's go to the elf village!" seems a somewhat unbelievable route to go down. Aren't you a bit too decisive?

Or rather, stop him already, Kuro. Consider what I wanted to achieve by restricting Yamada-kun's movements. It was to prevent the worst case scenario where the Hero Yamada-kun defeats the Demon King, right. What the heck is with you going along with the mood and saying "Alrighty, I'll go too!", eh? That jerk, I bet he knowingly induced Yamada-kun. Next time we meet I'll smack him down.

Still, I have to be impressed I guess. Yamada-kun's Divine Protection of Heaven is amazing. After all, normally there's no way he could have made it in time. It's not just that there wasn't enough time, but with all the obstructions around them just getting to the elf village itself shouldn't have been possible. Despite all that, Yamada-kun and co arrived at the elf village before us. They couldn't have achieved that without taking the shortest and best route. In addition to combining all their abilities, they would have needed good luck piled on top of good luck. I'm sure that's all down to Yamada-kun's Divine Protection of Heaven.

There was practically no time to spare. Even with using teleportation, it should have taken a minimum of 10-odd days to reach the elf village. For our Demon King's Army and for the Imperial Army lead by Natsume-kun it would

also take 10-odd days to arrive, or perhaps a bit more. It felt like even if they could take the shortest route they shouldn't have made it in time. In addition, that was only provided that they would be able to take the shortest route. If they had started moving just a day later they would have failed, and if they had taken more time than planned while travelling they would also have failed. It was like a chess problem where they couldn't afford a single mistake. However, it's not like Yamada-kun actually realised just how tight a situation he was in though.

Moreover. To be able to cross from one continent to another, there is a place that you must go through. As I'm sure you've realised, that's the Elro Great Labyrinth, the world's largest labyrinth, where I was born and raised. As might be expected from it connecting continents, the scale is on a whole other level compared to ordinary labyrinths. Having to take the shortest path while conquering that Great Labyrinth readily indicates the degree of difficulty.

If they hadn't chosen to come through the Elro Great Labyrinth then the result would have been obvious. Via the pope the teleportation rings in each country have already been blockaded. A particularly strong watch had been placed on the country where Yamada-kun's half-sister had gone to. If Yamada-kun's party had gone there then he would likely have been captured as easily as a moth lured by a flame. Considering that his first choice amongst his options was to plunge into the Elro Great Labyrinth, it felt like he already knew somehow.

Moreover, they chose a good guide. I was fascinated by the guide who is a nice guy oji-sama who I somehow remember seeing somewhere before, but this person is amazing. As for what's amazing, his route selection is mega. He selected the shortest and very best routes like it was natural as they pressed forwards. Even if Yamada-kun's Divine Protection of Heaven was assisting, it would still be impossible if the oji-sama himself wasn't an outstanding guide. It wouldn't be possible to achieve such a feat without accurately memorising the complex paths of the vast Elro Great Labyrinth.

Thanks to the oji-sama's precise guidance, Yamada-kun and co were able to break through the Elro Great Labyrinth without even having to experience a genuine hard fight you know. When I think just how much of a hard fight it was

for me to be able to leave the Elro Great Labyrinth, yeah, I better stop this line of thought. Just stop it. If I think about it too deeply a wave of murderous rage will awaken.

The one time when the Earth Dragon appeared did result in a real battle, but I bet that Kuro instigated that anyway. Considering that an Earth Dragon that was weak enough for Yamada-kun and co to beat just happened to turn up, no matter how you look at it I can only think that it was something that he set up. Maybe he wanted to let Yamada-kun and co level up a bit or something.

Well, for me, the bigger surprise was just after that when the babies turned up. They said a bunch of super profound sounding stuff and scared Yamada-kun and co, but what were they really up to? They might be my kids, but their thought process can't be understood. When I went to ask them what they had been up to immediately after they had come into contact with Yamada-kun and co, they snuggled up to me while somehow totally giving off an aura of "praise me, praise me" though. Umm, yeah. Based on that attitude, I can't tell them off without giving them an opportunity to explain their side.

Apart from the chance meeting with the babies, Yamada-kun's party was able to conquer everything smoothly. Considering the abilities of Yamada-kun and co they conquered it in the shortest time possible. Thus they reached the elf village without any problems.

It's strange, I guess. The Empire via Natsume-kun and the Divine Word Religion via the pope - there were all sorts of dragnets put in place to stop Yamada-kun's party, yet he bypassed all of them. For them to be able to bypass such a thorough setup, I can now only laugh about it. Dah-hah-hah-hah! Erm, yeah. I know that it would have been best if I had tried to give guys from those places some instructions, but this is me we're talking about here okay! There's just no way I could suddenly turn up and give orders to some unfamiliar guys, right? Besides which, I'm not in the chain of command for those guys in the first place - it's Natsume-kun and the pope. If I just casually turned up to give them orders, it's obvious that they'd respond with something like "who the heck are you?"

Let's stop with the excuses. In short, this is a case of "don't talk to strangers". That feels slightly off though, but it's not wrong.

Still, it's like this. Considering how much I suffered to be able to leave the Elro Great Labyrinth, seeing it conquered so easily gives an indescribable feeling. Humph! Even if you call that a conquest, Yamada-kun and co only passed through the upper layer anyway! I conquered the middle and lower layers as well! It seems that the upper layer has gotten weaker. However, that was already the weakest layer in the Erlo Great Labyrinth. For it to be conquered so easily is a disgrace to the Elro Great Labyrinth. Or something like that! If you want to boast about it you better at least conquer the middle layer!I feel so empty. Nai wa. Yeah, nai wa.....

Sigh. Well, since they've arrived already there's no helping it. I'll take action to prevent them from coming into contact with the Demon King as much as possible. To be honest, though Yamada-kun and co are scary in the sense that they might cause an unexpected situation, in terms of pure combat strength they're nothing special. I'm sure even Natsume-kun would act as a decoy if they run into each other.

There is just one person that the Demon King and I are in conflict with. Potimas Hyphenath. For the first time since I became a god, I'm about to get serious too.

Translation notes:

"nice guy oji-sama who I somehow remember seeing somewhere before" - naturally this is Basgas who she saw in chapter 127.

According to volume 5 of the LNs, the English romanisation of Potimas's name should be "Potimas Harrifenas" - I've used the previous romanisation for consistency.

"I'm about to get serious too" - in the sense of using her true/full power.

Chapter 290 - Before The Elf Village Battle

There is a barrier surrounding the elf village. The Imperial Army has brazenly taken up position right in front of it without any attempt to hide. Then, in a place some distance from the Imperial Army, the Demon King's Army has quietly set up camp. Furthermore, clustered as if in a formation on the opposite side of the elf village from the Imperial Army, is a squad of Taratekts lead by a Queen Taratekt. Still furthermore, on standby alone on the opposite side from the Demon King's Army, is me together with the Demon King and a limited number of her subordinates. In terms of numbers there might be the smallest amount here, but in terms of combat strength we're the most powerful, basically. In terms of layout, going clockwise around the elf village in the middle is the Imperial Army, the Demon King's Army, the Taratekt squad, then the Demon King and I completing the encirclement.

The strategy is as follows. Firstly, with a whack I will destroy the barrier surrounding the elf village. Here we'll set up a trick to make it look like the Imperial Army did their best with a new form of great magic to make it seem like they destroyed the barrier. I'm sure it'll at least make for a distraction.

Then, the Imperial Army will advance with Natsume-kun in the lead. Natsume-kun should draw all the hate towards him, so all the elves will most likely flood towards there. At least Yamada-kun's party should do me a favour and head there, I think. Or rather, if they don't then it'll be troublesome. We just gotta avoid the worst case scenario of the Demon King and Yamada-kun running into each other. Kuro, can I leave it to you? Please guide them properly, okay?

Well anyway, while the elves are focused on the Imperial Army, the Demon King's Army will start to advance. They will deliver an attack on the elves from the side. Command of the Demon King's Army has been left to Mera and oni-kun, and vampire girl is there too so there shouldn't be any problems. Felmina-chan is there just in case as well so I'm sure it'll work out somehow. Even if the elven forces are beyond what we had expected, they should still be able to

retreat safely. Basically, so long as vampire girl and oni-kun are there, they should be able to manage one way or another.

And then, when the elves are faced with dealing with a war on two fronts with the Imperial Army and Demon King's Army, we'll then pile on them with the Taratekt squad as a bonus. The Queen will be there too! Just with the Queen alone it would be a hopeless battle, but in addition there's 14 Archs. There's 51 Greaters. And a bunch of others. Seriously, wouldn't they be enough by themselves I wonder? Normally the elves would die.

So their agonising cries like it was a scene of hell is to be expected, and the Demon King and I plan to stealthily infiltrate the interior of the elf village by taking advantage of that confusion. The plan is to take decisive actions such as securing the reincarnators and the killing of Potimas's main body but so long as Potimas's main body is killed, then this war is as good as won. We've already gotten rid of all the clones he has outside of the elf village. The one that vampire girl got rid of in the Kingdom was probably his last clone. Even if some have slipped through, he's not able to switch between the main body and clones like me. For Potimas, his main body really is his main body, so his clones are basically remotely controlled. Because of that, so long as his main body is killed, then at that instant all his clones would become meaningless.

The Imperial Army, the Demon King's Army and even the Taratekt squad are all decoys. I'm sure that the Imperial Army which is the first decoy will suffer significant damage, but they were always an army that was gathered to be used then thrown away. So long as they can draw the elves' attention that's good enough. Then the elves will be ransacked by the Demon King's Army and the Taratekt squad. During that opening, the Demon King and I will then take whatever action we want. To be blunt, the Demon King and I just by ourselves have more combat strength than all the other armies put together.

Except the Demon King and I are currently glaring at each other.

「No matter what Shiro-chan says, I won't yield on this okay.」
「What's wrong is wrong.」

The extreme tension in the air is engulfing the surroundings. The Puppet Taratekts accompanying the Demon King are unable to withstand the tension

and are shivering in fear. With neither the Demon King nor I willing to back down on our opinions, we continue to glare at each other.

As for what we're arguing about, it's who gets to terminate Potimas's miserable existence. Because of the case with sensei and more, I want to beat the crap out of Potimas. Speaking of that more, because I can't predict how dangerous Potimas is, it's safer for me to deal with him since I'm stronger than the Demon King.

On the other hand, despite the Demon King being well aware of that, she still insists on wanting to fight with Potimas. Well sure, the Demon King has had to put up with Potimas being able to do whatever the hell he likes for so long. I'm sure her feelings are far deeper than mine.

However, her opponent is that Potimas Hyphenath. He is a man who has continued his secret maneuverings all this time, making enemies of the entire world, all by himself. He has the technology behind the cyborg body that the vampire girl defeated previously and the robots in the old world underground facility that became the trigger for my apotheosis. Taking them into account, my expectation is that the combat strength that Potimas has command over could even reach that of the Demon King. Considering what could potentially occur in such a insignificant place, I want to have a safety margin. Despite all that, the Demon King stubbornly refused to listen to that explanation. If that was all then I could still bear with it. I too have the desire of wanting to personally tear Potimas limb from limb, but the Demon King is going further than that. I think it would be fine to compromise. So long as she has my support.

「At least accept some support.」

「I refuse. This is my fight. I won't accept any intervention from anybody. Say whatever you like.」

This is the problem. The Demon King absolutely insists on finishing everything by herself. Whether it's support from me, or support from her own subordinates she won't permit anything. She wants to put an end to the ancient relationship between them one-on-one.

「I know that I'm being selfish. However, I can't yield on this. I must finish

everything with Potimas by myself. After all, that guy is my...」

The Demon King's eyes are resolved for the worst. Being directly stared at by those eyes, it starts to feel like I'm the one in the wrong.

「You might die you know?」

「Of course I know that. In the first place, my life span is already nearing the end. Even if I die here, I won't regret it. Because if I die, I believe that Shiro-chan will then deal with Potimas in my stead.」

With her expression saying that even if she dies she'll take Potimas down with her, she sure has a lot of nerve to say that. Argh. Nai wa.

I sigh heavily. If she's going to go that far then there's no way she'll back down. The Demon King plans to bet everything from her long life on challenging Potimas. Wagering her own pride. I guess there's no way that I can deny her that. Since she's telling me this in such a way that she knows I'll have to back down while being fully aware of that fact, she sure is nasty.

「Unforgivable.」

「Eh?」

「Dying is unforgivable. Because if you die then at that moment I would abandon this miserable world and flee. So as to also prevent me doing something so irresponsible, you absolutely must survive. Got that?」

「.....Roger that, boss.」

Being unable to watch the Demon King's face as she saluted with a smile while crying, I turned my head to the side.

Translation notes:

“Natsume-kun should draw all the hate towards him” - this is explained using gaming terms. Putting it another way, Natsume/Yuugo will “aggro” all the “mobs” (elves) by attacking first so that they target him and the Imperial Army.

Chapter 291 - Elf Village Battle ①

There's been one thing or another, but what's left is to break the barrier and storm in. And so, about that barrier thing, when I see it for real with my own eyes it's bad news. To put it in a word, it's AMAZING. Not just amazing, it's AMAZING. That's just how bad news this barrier is.

From the fact that the Demon King can't break it, it's readily apparent just how abnormal it is. The Demon King's status values of approximately 90,000 are a step below the System maximum. Given that she can't break it, it means that with any status values in this world, it's already impossible to break it. Not unless you surpass the limit. Thus, it can be said to be impossible to create such a thing with the power of the System. In other words, this barrier was created using technology that is unrelated to the System. Therefore, if you consider the technology capable of creating such a thing without using the System, there's basically only one type. The super-technology that uses MA Energy. Moreover, to maintain a barrier of this intensity, a large quantity of MA Energy needs to be consumed. It takes some nerve to use a barrier with such ridiculous conditions. This is defective equipment that shortens the life of this planet while in use, basically. Hey Kuro, why did you neglect this thing all this time?

Well, all that ends today as well. It's finally time to destroy this dangerous thing. And so, I take out a golden bat! It's time for some baseball!

「Eh?」

The Demon King makes some kind of stupid voice, but this bat is amazing okay? Anyhow, it's something from D's place. The second convenient item from the single-use only series! If a full swing is made with this, oh my how strange! No matter what it's made out of, it gets smashed to smithereens! Even the barrier would be no big deal.

Basically, it would be rather difficult to try to destroy this barrier with just my own power. That's because my basic abilities are rather lopsided you see. If things didn't go well it's possible that a great quantity of MA Energy would be consumed. Therefore I'll use whatever I can. Even if it's something that D made!

Any time now the Imperial Army will fire off their great magic. I then just have to do a full swing with this at the same time. Well then... The batter's box is ready! Player Shiro hits! It's a home run! As if.

I do a full swing with the bat to match the timing of the Imperial Army firing the great magic. The bat pulverises the barrier into tiny pieces, and having performed its role the bat also breaks apart.

Okay. Let's go then.

「Shiro-chan, what's with that bat that had a totally AMAZING sinister aura just now?」

「Demon King, there's many things that you are better off not knowing about, okay?」

Although the Demon King asked about the bat, I'd rather not have her poke her nose into D's carefully made convenient goods. While they certainly are convenient, on the other hand they're all terrifying to use. After all, it's D who made them you know? Wouldn't you be scared of having some terrible curse attached to you? I did do a careful check on them, and only used the ones that I could confirm don't have such a thing, you see. But this is D we're talking about, so it wouldn't be surprising for something to slip through my checks. Even so, I will use them when it's appropriate. They're so convenient after all! Though saying that I only have one item left now. I used the clock on Kuro already, and the bat just now. I should have the cards left still, but I lost those at some point though. I wonder where they ended up?

Well, rather than worry about that now, it's time to get the action started. When I use clairvoyance to get an overview of the state of the entire elf village, I see that losing the barrier has thrown the elves into panic and that the Imperial Army has begun to advance in high spirits with Natsume-kun in the vanguard. I shift my attention to the reincarnator residential area. Currently I can't see any indication that the elves are about to do something to the reincarnators. In the past I had infiltrated inside the barrier with my clones just in case, secretly deploying the bile sisters, so that I could quickly rescue them in case anything happened. There's an atmosphere like trouble seems to have broken out between the reincarnators themselves, but I guess that's Ogiwara-kun, the spy the pope had sent in? It kinda seems like he screwed up. Hmm,

well, there's no problem to leave them as they are.

Now while the elves are focused on the Imperial Army, it's time that we began our own jobs. And so, let's start moving. With me in the vanguard, I'm guiding the Demon King and co. I myself am capable of teleporting all over the place, but the Demon King isn't able to you see. Besides, if I use teleportation it's likely that the space tremor will be detected and our movement exposed. While we might have been exposed already, maybe we haven't either. So just in case, we'll take covert action.

I chose places without elves and plunge forwards. As we rush through the forest, I limit my speed enough so that the Demon King's subordinates, the Puppet Taratekts, can keep up with us. I don't neglect my intelligence gathering with clairvoyance while doing all this.

In spite of the desperate search made by the bile sisters, the exact location of Potimas has not been confirmed. It seems he was seriously rigorous about concealing himself. Truly, such prudence is typical of Potimas. However, the fact that he can't be found instead becomes a clue for identifying his location. Not being able to find him after searching so much, means that he is in the places that can't be searched. Having said that, it's inconceivable that he chose somewhere outside the village. Since that Potimas is using a barrier of that magnitude, I doubt he would take a gamble on placing his main body outside. His main body must be inside the most secure barrier. And also, in a place within that barrier that couldn't be searched. Considering all that, it's possible to identify his location. He's underground. Since he couldn't be found after searching every nook and cranny above ground, he has to be there.

What I must discover, are the passages that lead underground. However, there's no need to search. Above ground, there hasn't been even a single sighting of a robot created using the super-technology that Potimas should have. In that case, they should be concealed below ground in the same place as Potimas's main body. With the attack they're facing, they won't be able to cope without using those robots. At some point they will definitely be released. When that happens, we just have to attack the place that they come out from. Since the very place that they come out from should be a path that connects to where Potimas is.

And, right when I say that, about one kilometer ahead of us the ground surface suddenly splits open, and from there robots come crawling out. Wow. Those robots look like something that could appear in a certain war amongst the stars movie. Four arms and four legs. Those four arms have guns attached. A bunch of SF-like robots that don't fit this fantasy world.

As soon as the robots get above ground, they start moving towards us. It seems that Mr Enemy has already noticed us. Using four legs for dexterity, they dash through the forest at high speed. They're fast huh. Converting them into System status values, I guess around 5,000? For the Demon King and I that level of speed is trivial, but for the Puppet Taratekts it might be a bit of a hard fight. The Puppet Taratekts might have status values of over 10,000, but I don't know how powerful the weapons that those robots are equipped with are though, and there's a lot of them as well.

「Enemies approaching. I will deal with them.」

I briefly report to the Demon King and co. Immediately I move at high speed, before the robots can get close enough for visual contact, I activate my magecraft. Multiple bullets of darkness fly out, and rain down on the robot army. The robots are penetrated with barely any resistance, and are destroyed.

.....How fragile. This is Potimas's combat ability? Nah, can't be. There's no way it's just this junk.

But, well, I've found the underground entrance. I ignore the wreckage of the destroyed robots as I pass through them, and arrive at the entrance that the robot army came out from. It seems that the lid to the entrance is being closed in a hurry, but I stop that by force. Or rather, I smash the lid itself.

The entrance that the robots came out from, has a steep descent. Down there, is Potimas.

I exchange glances with the Demon King, who silently nods her head and heads down. From here on, only the Demon King will proceed. Because that is the Demon King's desire. We will not interfere. However, to watch over her I've secretly placed a single miniscule clone, and it accompanies her. Don't die, Demon King.

Now then, time for me to do what I can here.

Translation notes:

“AMAZING” - Shiro says it’s not “amazing” (sugoi) but “AMAZING” (sungoi). Both words essentially mean the same thing but the latter has more emphasis.

“Bile sisters” - this is from chapter 233 - The black-hearted biles.

“Magecraft” - as noted in chapter 275, what Shiro uses is “magecraft” (魔術) not “magic” (魔法), since she’s outside the System.

Chapter 292 - Elf Village Battle ②

I see the Demon King off, and while at it instruct the Puppet Taratekts to each move according to their own judgement. If I need to keep moving in step with these guys, I won't be able to take action freely. Based on the ability of the robots seen just now, even these guys should be able to deal with them. Well, there's no way I can think of these robots as being the most dangerous things in his armoury, so it wouldn't be at all strange if something terrible turns up though. The Puppet Taratekts are as smart as anyone else anyway, so I'm sure that if they feel that it's too dangerous then they'll withdraw. Hmm. Go ahead and raise hell. Meanwhile, I'll do as I please.

That being said, what shall I do first? The top pick would be to go off and secure the reincarnators. For the moment the reincarnators don't seem to be in any danger, but if I secure them then I'll be able to guarantee their safety.

The second pick would be to keep reducing the elven forces. Basically to go around and whack every last one of the robots. To put it simply, I feel that would be the best. Apart from the robots, the normal elven forces are on a level where just the Imperial Army and Demon King's Army can manage. If the robots aren't here then the elven forces are not much different from normal humans with a bit more magic ability included. Even though they have the advantage of location, while they are fighting with the Imperial Army, once they receive a surprise attack from the Demon King's Army to their flank, they'll be helpless. Or rather, the Demon King's Army has vampire girl, oni-kun and Mera anyway. Just those guys alone will be able to trample down the elves.

And so, for the elven forces apart from the elves themselves, in other words the robots hidden underground, I think I'll go exterminate them. If I can manage that somehow then we've basically won. As for the reincarnators, well, since the bile sisters are there, it'll be fine to leave them alone for a while. Now then! It's time for some R-O-B-O-T H-U-N-T-I-N-G!

And the moment I think that, the ground starts splitting open all over the place, and a large number of robots come out from there.

Crank, crank. Erm? Isn't that a lot? Yeah, loads! With a quick glance, there's definitely at least 10,000 of them though!?

Woah. I thought they were fragile, but they were mass production general purpose robots then huh. Having 10,000 robots that are each about equal to a dragon, that sure would be a threat to the people of the world. The violence of numbers is scary.

Anyway, a certain familiar jijii is being attacked by those robots. Yep. It's the well-known jijii from the Empire. That jijii is without doubt the strongest human in the Empire, or rather, he's strong enough to be nearly the strongest human around, but it seems that even he is having a hard time against those robots which are about as strong as a lower class dragon.

Hrm. What's to be done here? While he could be called an acquaintance, it's not like I ever had much to do with him anyway, so I don't have to help him. Well, whatever. I need to scrap all the robots that have come out anyway, so I'll just do it in passing, just in passing.

I activate magecraft on all the robots surrounding the jijii. Instead of choosing the darkness magecraft from last time, I selected space magecraft. The robots are swallowed into another dimension, and there my waiting clones will start disassembling them. In doing so, I'll chew up all the energy from the power source that propels the robots. It's precious energy for a start, so I'll have it collected in order to utilise it properly. It sure seems that absorbing external energy is one of my strong points. Apparently, it's not normally possible to readily absorb wild energy. I can do it though so I'll use it.

The jijii was able to defeat one robot, but he's suffered such a serious injury that it's almost a double knockout. I've come this far, so just in passing I quickly perform treatment.

「Oohh! You are.....!
.....!!」

The jijii shouts out something but I ignore it and go on to hunt the next set of robots. Yep. I had remembered. That once that jijii starts talking he goes on forever. I don't have time right now for such a long talk. Therefore, ignore, ignore. I've consumed pretty much all the robots in the region around the jijii,

so I'm sure he'll be able to return by himself.

I go around tossing every last robot that I come across into the other dimension. Kusama-kun was being chased around by robots so I rescued him. There's robots appearing around the Taratekt squad, but the Queen is there so I can put off doing something about them.

Then, while I'm doing my best dealing with the robot army, I spot the scene of vampire girl and oni-kun bullying Yamada-kun's party. What the heck, guys. Yamada-kun seems to be holding his head and floundering around or something though. Eh? Doesn't that look bad? The way he seems to be suffering looks rather abnormal, so did vampire girl and oni-kun do something to him? On top of that, I took my eyes off him for a minute and Natsume-kun has died! What the heck!? I had planned to knock him down later so that sensei could punish him properly though!? Why is he dead!? It rather seems like a bunch of unexpected things have occurred, so I guess I'll go take a look.

I move to where vampire girl and oni-kun are by teleporting. Thereupon, there's zombies rampaging around that are probably being controlled by vampire girl, and Ooshima-kun and Kuro who are fighting hard trying to protect Yamada-kun who has collapsed and is convulsing.

「Wakaba-san.」

While moaning, Yamada-kun notices me, and utters that name. Then, like a puppet having its strings cut, he loses consciousness. It doesn't seem like he's died, but considering his state just now I can't be careless. Anyway, I better check his condition, and treat him.

Thinking that, I take a step forwards, but a certain person stands in my way. With the fallen Yamada-kun behind her, thrusting a sword before me with a desperate expression on her face, is Ooshima-kun. Hmmm. I'm basically trying to save Yamada-kun here, but if you come at me with that "I'll die before letting you pass!" attitude, it's troubling. Right next to the strangely acting Ooshima-kun is Kuro, but when I glance my head towards him, the bastard ignores me. Instead he lines up along-side Ooshima-kun. Like this, instead of Kuro, I guess he's acting as Hyrinth in this place? Hrm, hmmm. If Kuro is taking that attitude, then I guess it's okay to assume that there's nothing urgently wrong with

Yamada-kun that requires action?

In which case, I guess there's no need to rush things. First of all, I guess beating down the ringleader behind this chaos comes first, yeah.

「I wonder why? Is it just my imagination or is there a really bad aura coming off of goshujin-sama, perhaps?」

It's not your imagination, my dear vampire girl. I bet you've done something unnecessary! Come on, spit it out quickly! What did you do!?

「Please don't make such a reproachful expression. I haven't done anything, okay? Goshujin-sama, I don't think it's good to one-sidedly decide that whenever something happens that it's my fault.」

That's a lie!

Translation notes:

With regards to Ronant's two lines of ... think of the first line of him being happy and surprised to see Shiro and the second line being him dumbfounded to see her immediately leave. Or something like that.

“That's a lie!” - probably a reference (in words if not in tone) to the uso da! meme.

Chapter 293 - Elf Village Battle ③

「You are Wakaba-san, right? Just what is going on here!? What was done to Shun!?!」

Ooshima-kun yells that out, but I'm just about to put the screws on the suspect who most likely did something to Yamada-kun, so please wait a moment.

「Shiro-san, we truly haven't done anything.」

Just as I had seized vampire girl by the scruff of her neck and was about to make her confess everything, there's an unexpected defense motion from oni-kun!

「Shun did something to the half-elf who is collapsed over there, and then suddenly he was in pain. Based on the situation, isn't it likely that Shun used some skill and then experienced a side-effect from that?」

To oni-kun's calm analysis, vampire girl nodded her head quickly in support. Suspicious. That vampire girl's eyes are swimming a bit, is extremely suspicious.

「Well, the one who caused the situation that forced Shun to use the skill was Sophia-san though.」

Never expecting oni-kun's support to be reversed so quickly, vampire girl turns to look at oni-kun with such force that you can practically hear a "vwhip" sound effect. Her face totally has "I don't believe this guy, why the fuck did he expose it!" written on it. As expected, the perpetrator is YOU isn't it!

「The zombies that Sophia-san is controlling fatally shot the half-elf over there. Shun performed medical treatment, but the next moment he was in pain. That's about how it looked from my perspective.」

Oni-kun concisely explains the situation. Yup, easy to understand indeed. Hm? He performed treatment then was in pain?

「By the way, unless I'm mistaken, it shouldn't have been possible to treat that half-elf in time. It was a fatal wound to all appearances after all. No matter how

good Shun's magic abilities might be, there's no way she could be saved in time.」

Hmm? Huh? In other words, the half-elf who is unconscious right next to Yamada-kun had actually died? However, she's breathing normally for a start and is basically just unconscious right? Which means that Yamada-kun used his Kindness skill to resurrect the dead then?

「Is what Shun did resurrecting the dead? Well, for such an ability, there's no way such a thing should be possible without compensation, right? I don't know what kind of compensation there might be, but considering how much Shun was suffering it seems about right. Kanata, I'd rather you don't blame us for that okay.」

As if spitting it out, oni-kun said so to Ooshima-kun, who is still firmly holding up her sword. Even though her eyes are showing confusion, there is the light of reason in her eyes as she tries to sort out the situation. It seems she's desperately thinking about whether it's possible to break through this situation.

However, I can't afford to worry about that right now. I'm dripping in cold sweat. Isn't the reason for Yamada-kun's collapse, my fault in a way? After all, for him to collapse after using Kindness, that absolutely has to be because his Taboo level was max'd, right? The compensation for using Kindness is for Taboo to go up a level. If it was just that then there's no pain or anything. Not unless Taboo's level is max'd. I've experienced that myself as well, but even now I still can't forget that revolting experience. Yep. It's no surprise for him to lose consciousness.

And so, it just happens that the perpetrator behind the previous incidents to raise Yamada-kun's Taboo level by deliberately causing people to die in front of him, is right here. It's me! Indeed, it's my fault that Yamada-kun's Taboo level has max'd! The final straw was due to vampire girl's actions, but it's still a fact that I had been causing it to pile up previously. Ack, I can't blame vampire girl now.

「Besides all that, Kanata. Didn't you make rather too much fuss over Shun merely losing consciousness?」

While I'm pondering how to conceal the truth, oni-kun conveniently changes

the subject.

「Shun is still alive. He's not dead. Also, this is a battlefield. It wouldn't be unusual to die here. Despite all that, why did you get into such a panic over something as minor as him losing consciousness? I hope I'm wrong, but surely you are not standing here with neither the resolution to die, nor the resolution to lose others, right?」

A sense of intimidation surges out from oni-kun, like an electric shock. Perhaps they were overwhelmed by the intimidation, as the Imperial Army and elven army fighting a short distance away stop moving. Even the zombies that are already lifeless seem to have stopped moving out of dread. Ooshima-kun, who is faced with taking that intimidation head on, has a torrent of sweat running down her while quivering. As if she had had a bucket of water thrown over her, a ridiculous amount of sweat is pouring off her. Her body is visibly shaking in fear. It's to the degree that you wonder how she can even be still standing.

「If you are standing here with such half-hearted resolution, then I am disappointed. Without knowing the truth, without having the resolution, yet you are convinced that you are on the side of justice or something? That's so not funny that it could inspire rage. When I think that my former friend has become such a fool, it's repellent in the extreme.」

Oni-kun, unusually for him, is hurling abuse at someone without even trying to conceal his disgust. That rage, perhaps being overlooked amongst all the intimidation, somehow feels fishy. Well, since his former friend is his opponent he might be thinking about various things. That opponent, known as Ooshima-kun, is only half-conscious due to being overpowered by oni-kun.

「Kanata. This is your first and last warning. Lower your weapon and surrender. Otherwise, even though we were once friends, I will cut you down. That's what it means to be resolved.」

I'm sure he actually has no intention of doing so, but oni-kun declares that with plenty of intimidation. That was the clincher. Ooshima-kun goes weak at the knees, and sinks to the ground right there. Having already comprehended the gulf in strength between them to a painful degree, she yielded by instinct

rather than by reason. Well, that's when you go "it's impossible" after all. The despair that Ooshima-kun is feeling now, would probably be similar to what I had felt in the past when I met Alaba for the first time, I guess? That it's impossible to win, just from feeling the other's presence. That's just how much of a difference in strength there was.

Ooshima-kun loses the will to fight and retires. Yamada-kun, sensei and the half-elf are unconscious. Only Hyrinth, Kuro, is left. Yep. I guess I can leave this place to oni-kun and vampire girl already.

Chapter 294 - Elf Village Battle ④

I feel a faint rumble. Amongst all the battles going on throughout this forest, this was caused by the most violent one. On becoming aware of that, I half-opened my eyes just briefly and looked at Kuro, then teleported away from that place. Yamada-kun's party have become almost powerless, so there shouldn't be any problems with leaving the rest to oni-kun. It's understood that the reason for Yamada-kun's suffering was due to Taboo being max'd. Given his condition, even after he wakes up he probably wouldn't be able to take any action for a while, so there's almost no chance he'll run into the Demon King. In which case, it's fine to leave things as they are.

More than that, since the elven ultimate weapon has finally come out, I want to give it my undivided attention. Indeed, the elves have finally brought it out. It's a weapon that's on a completely different level to those robots until now.

What I saw on teleporting, was the Taratekt squad being trampled down. Spiders who were as small as I was in the past, large grown-up versions of those spiders, and even further grown-up giant spiders, were all similarly being trampled over without being able to do anything. Included in that list, is even the Queen.

That thing was floating in the air. To describe it simply, it was a sea urchin. A huge sphere about 10 meters in diameter. From that sphere sprung countless thorns. Yup. It's a sea urchin. A huge metal sea urchin.

While that sea urchin's outward appearance might give one pause for thought, its abilities are seriously bad news. Those thorns that stick out from its body - every one of them is a gun barrel, and they are continuously carpet bombing the area. There's no place to hide. A barrage of shells comes raining down incessantly from the sea urchin floating up in the sky, turning the ground into scorched earth. The forest is being blown away. Along with the Taratekt squad that's there.

Even the Queen is unable to escape from that bombardment, and her body is being ground down. With the Queen's huge body, it's like giving a big target for

the bombardment. Normally the Queen would be able to evade an opponent's attacks with a speed that doesn't match her huge body, but I guess she has no way to cope with a wide area bombardment that's unavoidable.

Naturally however, the Queen isn't about to go down quietly. Maybe it's the dignity of a queen, but even while suffering a rain of cannon shells, in her mouth a contradictory black glow of energy is being gathered. The breath attack. The Queen, who is in the highest class of monsters, fires that breath attack with her full power. That thick and wide black beam shoots out at the sea urchin floating up in the sky. The shells being fired by the sea urchin are blown away, and that surge of energy even blows away the main body of the sea urchin itself, as the beam reaches even into outer space. Such a scene was manifested.

That's just how powerful it was. When the Queen attacks with all her might, a direct hit boasts enough destructive power to even blow up a mountain and alter the landscape. A mere 10 meter diameter lump of metal would obviously be blown away without any trace. Despite all that, the sea urchin is still going strong. The breath was a direct hit. There wasn't even any indication that it avoided the attack. It was as if it was saying that it wasn't even worth avoiding.

The magecraft field erected around the sea urchin, erased the Queen's breath attack. It "erased" the attack. It didn't "defend" against it. That field completely erased the Queen's breath attack. It was as if it had never existed in the first place.

I know that field. At any rate, it is something I have experienced before. In that old world underground facility. What I had experienced there, was magecraft jamming. This is a barrier version of that. Since it is technology that existed in the old world long ago, it's not at all surprising for Potimas to know about it since he is a survivor from that time. Which is why, it's not at all surprising to encounter a weapon using that. Surely this is the ultimate weapon of the elves.

With the breath attack being ineffective against the sea urchin, there's nothing that the Queen can do. Long distance attacks are entirely defended against by the sea urchin's field. There's no other option left except to attack with a pure physical attack, but the incessant downpour of shells don't allow

that. While the Queen could use Space Maneuver to somehow advance up on the enemy in the sky, as soon as she could take a step upwards a shell would pin her back to the ground. Every time the Queen's body is hit by a shell it is whittled away, and before it can be regenerated the next shell strikes down.

That Queen which is equal to Mother, is being trampled down without being able to do anything. What a terrifying weapon they've developed there. Wouldn't that single one be able to take over the world? There would be the problem of how many shells remain and how much energy would be required to keep it operational though. But, it's not running out at all huh. Most likely the space inside has been enlarged, with the shells being stored in another dimension or something. Otherwise it doesn't make sense.

I'm not simply observing this giant monster vs futuristic weapon battle either. Despite what it seems I'm properly trying to help the Queen, and am attacking the sea urchin as well. However, that field is also preventing me from being able to do anything at all. The death chute from another dimension and the barrier are both preventing me, and in the first place I can't open the entrance to the other dimension. Any sniping with magecraft is also completely erased by the field. Gnnn! The strength of that field is way higher than I had expected.

The magecraft jamming field isn't omnipotent. Since it is jammed and not negated, there is a practical threshold to it. In short, if the power output of an attack exceeds what the field can jam, then it will pass through without being erased. However, since that would require using an attack with enough energy to surpass the jamming, from the fact that the Queen's breath attack was erased without any problems, I'm forced to conclude that the strength of the field is extremely high.

Yup. It's impossible!

Well, it's not like I couldn't do it you know? However, having to do such a thing would require me to consume a non-trivial amount of energy you know. Basically, it's wasteful. Therefore, I will use a different method. If at all possible, I didn't want to use this. Beggars can't be choosers though.

I open my eyes. I gather power in my pupils. Then, I bring the sea urchin into view. Activate Evil Eye of Gluttony!

This Evil Eye is one of the new Evil Eyes that I've developed since becoming a god. Its ability is similar to the Demon King's Gluttony skill. For that reason I named it the Evil Eye of Gluttony. Its ability is to directly plunder energy. With this Evil Eye, the magecraft that comes into my field of vision is decomposed into energy and absorbed.

Strictly speaking, the magecraft jamming field that the sea urchin is equipped with as a barrier, is also a form of magecraft. A magecraft that jams and erases magecraft. That's the true nature of the magecraft jamming field. If that's the case then I simply have to develop a magecraft that extinguishes even a magecraft that extinguishes magecraft. What brought this to my attention, is the Demon King's Seven Deadly Sin skill of Gluttony. The ability of Gluttony is to convert anything and everything into energy, and to then consume that. Taking the theory behind that, I reconstructed it to make these Evil Eyes of Gluttony focus on magecraft instead of converting energy in general. This is one of the secret weapons that I developed to combat Kuro. For that reason, I didn't particularly want to reveal this to Kuro though.

With its strong point of the magecraft jamming field being eaten by my Evil Eyes of Gluttony, and with the magecraft it used to float also being eaten, the sea urchin falls down. Lying in wait for it is the Queen. The sea urchin still tries to resist by firing shells, but after falling to the ground without its barrier the sea urchin has no chance of succeeding. The huge fangs of the Queen pierce the sea urchin's steel body, and it's turned into scrap. We won.

And, the moment I thought that, the sea urchin exploded.

The Queen takes that explosion at point-blank range. That causes half her body to vanish, and the remainder collapses feebly onto the ground. Dammit! To self-destruct at the last moment, they sure got us. Well, although it's a serious blow that the Taratekt squad has been annihilated including the Queen, conversely it can be said that that's all it took to destroy the ultimate weapon of the elves. If I think of it as necessary expenses, then it's perfectly acceptable.

While I'm thinking that, into my field of vision comes another floating sea urchin. Not just one, but a swarm of them.

.....Huh? Eh? Hm? Hmm? Hmmmmmmm!?

Wait a second please! Wait, wait, wait!? Ehh!? There wasn't just one of those sea urchins!? Or rather, isn't this a lot? At a glance it looks like there's over one hundred floating sea urchins though? On top of that, it seems like there's some kind of triangular pyramid floating in the middle of the sea urchins that's much bigger than them too. Could it be, that the sea urchin wasn't their ultimate weapon at all, but a production model weapon? Then, that triangular pyramid in the centre is the real ultimate weapon? Oh shit. Maybe I've been underestimating the elven forces a bit too much.

Translation notes:

“large monster” - this Japanese for this (大怪獣) is a term specific to the Japanese film industry, eg for films like Godzilla featuring large monsters. Most of Shiro's line here sounds like a headline from a movie poster.

“Magecraft jamming” - this term (魔術妨害) first appeared in chapter 198 when Kumoko encountered the robots underground. The term “magecraft jamming field” (魔術妨害結界), which could also be translated as “magecraft jamming barrier”, is new though.

“Death chute” - this term previously came up in chapter 236.

Chapter 295 - Elf Village Battle ⑤

Author's note: Demon King's perspective

「How pathetic.」

The voice that's repellent in the extreme, can be heard coming out from speakers installed somewhere.

「In the end, this is all you amount to. The only one I have to be cautious against is Gyuriedistodiez. Against me who has made preparations on the assumption of facing a genuine god, surely you didn't think you could actually win? That's why you are and will always be a mere girl.」

Maybe it's just my imagination but he's unusually talkative. Maybe he's just that happy.

「Nonetheless, we've known each other for a long time. It would be an insult for me to go easy on you at the end. Consider this as you being worthy enough for me to destroy you with all my might. I evaluated you high enough to actually decide to use this Gloria Type Ω on you, which was built to take on Gyuriedistodiez.」

An evaluation that doesn't make me happy is dispassionately spoken through the speakers. Right in front of me, is a machine weapon that appears to be entirely looking down on me.

「This is deeply moving. An association of many years, is finally coming to an end today. I'll settle what's going on outside soon. Farewell, my greatest failed work.」

Then, the blade of that machine weapon swung down towards me.



Going back in time a little.

I separated from Shiro-chan and co, and went down the descent that carried on endlessly by myself. A passage that continued down into the ground.

Potimas is waiting ahead of this.

Then, after finally coming to the end of the descent, there was a place like a vast warehouse. I think that this room was most likely used to store the robots that Shiro-chan is mopping up above. It's not just used for storage, but for performing maintenance as well it seems, as there's suitable looking machines dotted here and there.

「Welcome.」

Suddenly, a voice resounded out of nowhere. Echoing through this enclosed room, it wasn't clear where it was coming from. However, even with that echoing voice, there was no mistaking the owner.

「Potimas.」

「Indeed.」

Potimas sounded uninterested in his response. Simultaneously, there was a thunderous roar behind me. On turning around, the passage that I had came down is shut by a massive metal door.

「How foolish. Didn't you suspect there would be a trap?」

At the same time that I could hear Potimas's disdainful words, my body lost its strength. The power that had been humming throughout my entire body until then, vanished as if disappearing into thin air. Perhaps it would be better to say that it was erased?

A magecraft jamming field. Probably because it is laid out across the entire warehouse, my status values vanish. In the situation where my status values are gone and my skills are unusable, I can't use any power beyond what my appearance might indicate.

「I certainly never expected you to actually walk into the trap by yourself so easily. When a path in enemy territory is shown so ostentatiously, I would think that it's normal to distrust it. Nothing but a mere girl in the end. Or rather, nothing but a mere insect I guess.」

A number of robots of the same type that I saw above ground came out from the interior of the warehouse. They surround me, who cannot use my strength due to the field, and point their guns at me.

「How boringly simple. Ours is an association of many years. I'll at least send you off without suffering.」

A flash of fire bursts from the guns. Being turned into a beehive after being shot at with a hail of bullets from every direction - is totally not happening!

I jump and quickly rise up into the air, performing a flip so that my feet land on the ceiling. Jumping off from the ceiling, I accelerate with gravity to do a dropkick that lands on a robot. The armour of the robot that I kicked is crushed, and is hopelessly broken.

「Oh-ho.」

Potimas speaks out with an admiring voice. That tone implies that he's still very composed.

「You sure don't get it.」

Therefore, in order to destroy that composure, I'll make this declaration.

「I came in order to make you feel despair. What do you think the fastest way to achieve that is? It's by breaking through all the traps that you've prepared, and boldly coming to stand before you.」

「Humph. You're sure are talking big.」

「Consider the best use of the brief time you have left to live, and face it with composure. Because I'll be coming to stand before your main body before long, after having torn through all your traps and the machines that you're so proud of. When that happens, feel free to turn pale with fright and beg for your life.」

On hearing my caustic words, Potimas emitted a low “kukuku” laugh.

「Try it if you dare, little girl.」

While I wonder whether he's finished speaking or not, all the robots around me prepare their guns at once. The moment I leap off the ground and leave that spot, the place I was in until just now was pierced by bullets.

I might have said all that, but the situation is not good. It's one thing if I can get to a place without the field, but I'm at a disadvantage fighting in this place where I can't make proper use of my status values. Although I acted tough, my odds of success are not even 10,000 to 1.

A magecraft jamming field. It temporarily prevents the power of the System from reaching, the most troublesome kind of field for all those living within this world. If the status values supported by the System's assistance are lost, then those living within this world can't use any more power than their appearance suggests, or even less. In my case, I can't use any more power than a mere girl, as Potimas calls me. In human terms my body stopped growing in the first half of my teens after all. I would like to say at least one complaint about why couldn't I have grown at least a bit more. This body is so dainty, and lacking in muscle. What is known as status values in this world are supported by magecraft, combined with the calculations of the physical ability scores provided by one's natural body. In my case, my status values are almost entirely supported by magecraft, as my underlying physical strength is an insignificant amount of the total numerical value. In short, what I'm trying to say here, is that having lost the magecraft support due to the field, I'm now in deep trouble!

As if! I guess that's what Potimas is expecting me to be thinking? I predicted this would happen anyway, so I've taken countermeasures already.

There is a flaw with magecraft jamming fields, which is that they can't obstruct magecraft within the interior of the body. In other words, if I am able to intentionally activate magecraft within my body, then it's not negated. Together with Shiro-chan, so that I'll be able to manifest a similar level of fighting strength whether I'm inside a magecraft jamming field or within the System normally, I've practiced using internal body strengthening magecraft. Different from a skill, a magecraft technique. By using that, the enhancement that is normally left entirely to the System, can now be manually manifested instead. Even if there is an obstruction, the energy that gives form to my status values is still within my body. If that's the case, then I just have to master how to use that without depending upon the System. As a result, although I can't use skills like magic that manifest outside the body within the field, I've become able to manifest a physical ability that's almost identical to what I can within the System. My combat abilities are: a physical offensive ability of about 90,000, a physical defense ability of about 90,000 and a speed of about 90,000. These robots which are of similar fighting strength to a low ranked dragon species, are no match for me at all.

I sweep through the robots swarming towards me. They're turned into scrap. And then, from the interior, another robot comes out. Maybe this robot is special compared to the other robots that have appeared until now, as its outward appearance noticeably stands out. It is a human shaped robot with slender limbs, and a profusion of angular forms. With an overall height of about three meters, it's not that large.

「This is our secret weapon. Should you be able to defeat this, then even I would shower you with praise.」

「Whatever.」

I clench my fists. No matter what comes, I just have to pulverise it!

「But then, I doubt you'd even be able to face it properly though.」

Ignoring Potimas's bullshit, I took a step forwards. I was supposed to take a step forwards. A dull impact was felt by my head, and gradually pain spread out at the same time.

「Huh?」

I didn't know what had happened. All I could understand was that I had collapsed. However, I don't know what caused my collapse. Even when I tried to get up in a rush, I couldn't put any strength into my body, not even to move a finger.

「How pathetic.」

Then, as if sneering at me, Potimas's voice resounded from the speakers.

Translation notes:

“Welcome” - this is said in the sense of “you did well to come here”.

Potimas's first line and last line are identical. This should indicate where the flashback meets with the “current” action.

Elf Village Battle ⑥

Author's note: Potimas's perspective

Through the monitor, I gaze on the form of Ariel, collapsed on the ground. It certainly has been a long association. In my long life, she matches with Gyuriedistodiez and Dustin as those who I've associated with the longest. But, even after such a long association, the end was all too quick.

Surely even Ariel herself doesn't understand why she collapsed. On the contrary, maybe she's lost consciousness already. If that's the case, being able to die in one's sleep might be the ideal way to die, in a sense. As I declared earlier, I can kill her painlessly. For me, that's my way of showing her respect as her sworn enemy for such a long time. Heh, this is no good. When did I of all people start getting sentimental? Perhaps that shows just how significant an existence Ariel is to me.

You just never know. She was an existence that I had initially thought of as a worthless creation, so I hadn't ever expected her to develop into someone who could oppose me. Thinking about it that way, amongst all the useless articles that I had thrown away until now, maybe there were others who could improve into an outstanding talent in the future. But then, for such a miraculous result, that's practically like finding gold dust amongst a heap of garbage. If I had that much time, it would be much more constructive to try striking gold in another place. Ariel is the one and only miraculous example of garbage transforming into a gold nugget. Which is exactly why she is both something precious to me, and something depressing.

If only one thing, yes, if only one thing had been different, she might have been under my wing. If she didn't believe in that idiotic existence called the Goddess, her uncommon ability might have gained her the position of being my right hand person. If that had happened, rather than calling her a mere girl of a failed creation, I would have treated her as my real daughter. Thinking that becomes highly irritating. Although I understand this is meaningless even as a theoretical possibility, that I still feel this shows just what a missed opportunity

it was. However, in actuality we are antagonists to each other, and thus there she is, collapsed on the ground.

The reason why Ariel has collapsed, is that she's in a poison induced coma. This is not the fake poison within the System, but a chemical poison. For poison produced within the System, it can be counterbalanced by the resistance. But, the effect of that resistance is purely limited to poisons created within the System, so it does nothing against real poisons. It is a cruel bait-and-switch. Contriving a magecraft attack purporting to be poison, then being able to resist that with something purporting to be poison resistance. Because that's how those skills in the form of energy are produced.

Ariel has been living for a long time within the System. For that reason, she's under the impression that poison doesn't affect her. Natural poisons are erased by the System, so all that's left is the fake poison created by the System. So it wouldn't be strange for her to be under that impression. Seriously, there is nothing more absurd than this thing called the System. It distorts the laws of nature entirely, transforming the condition of the world, and on top of that forces all the living things within this world to supply energy. Again and again, I tried to perfect a poison that would not be erased by the System, and in the end I realised that couldn't be accomplished. However, being unable to stomach the sense of being defeated by the System is now a nostalgic memory for me.

Although it was like the embodiment of all that was absurd with the System, it's not like it was faultless. That Ariel can be afflicted by poison and has fainted is proof. The name of the poison that has Ariel in the grip of death, is carbon dioxide.

If you think about it it seems obvious, but within just the single word of "poison" there are a vast number of varieties. Amongst them are things that despite being poison, are indispensable to this world. The prime example being the aforementioned carbon dioxide. Not just limited to humans, the majority of living creatures absorb oxygen, and release carbon dioxide. Then, that carbon dioxide is absorbed by plants, and released as oxygen. Not even the System can overturn this cycle. Therefore, carbon dioxide can never be removed from this world. When the concentration is increased, carbon dioxide indisputably

becomes a poison.

The rest is simple. I just have to pump a large quantity of carbon dioxide into an enclosed room. When the concentration of carbon dioxide is increased, respiratory failure occurs, a disordered consciousness is induced, and eventually death occurs. Whether or not the System's assistance bestows transcendental strength or not, that body is that of a proper living creature. Because it is a living creature, it cannot escape from reason.

Although the System and in particular that which is similar to the power of god might seem to be disregarding reason, in practice it is not the case that they are completely separated from reason. They might seem to be separate from reason, but in fact fixed rules still exist. They might seem to be able to do anything, but something like the embodiment of a miracle requires expending a large quantity of energy in exchange, so if there is not enough energy to put it into practice then the realisation of that is impossible. In addition, even if enough energy is available, the process for implementing it must be understood.

What is called magecraft, does not produce something from nothing. This is only a hypothesis, but I think that what I call energy might actually be the underlying basis for atoms. Materials can change state between solid, liquid and gas, so in that case it wouldn't be strange if the same applies to atoms which are the underlying basis for materials. And that is what "energy" is. Magecraft is a technique to manipulate that energy, and through external interference energy can be converted into materials. If that is so, then it is theoretically possible for energy to be converted into oxygen, and for carbon dioxide to be reduced to energy.

Therefore, it's no mystery why Ariel was able to almost completely avoid the Gloria's strike, and for her body that should be been afflicted by carbon dioxide to stand up either.

I see. Somehow or other, it seems that she does know the process required to properly break out of this situation. Whether or not one has the energy, magecraft cannot create a miracle if one does not have the knowledge to manipulate it. With the intrinsic energy that Ariel has, it wouldn't be impossible for her to heal herself of the carbon dioxide poisoning, or for her to be able to

continue fighting. If she knew how. And, Ariel did know how. That's exactly why she was able to stand up.

Dammit, such a missed opportunity. That she has all that power, all that knowledge, yet I have no choice but to completely crush her.

I shall praise you for being able to stand. However, it's not like the magecraft jamming field has vanished, nor has the concentration of carbon dioxide in this room reduced. With such an environment, Ariel must fight that Gloria. Creating miracles with magecraft requires energy. If there is not enough energy then a miracle cannot be performed. That being the case, how long can Ariel last for I wonder? In order to counter the magecraft jamming field she's performing internal body enhancement, while having to constantly treat herself of carbon dioxide poisoning, and fight the Gloria on top of that.

This Gloria is the answer I came to under the assumption of facing Gyuriedistodiez. A god is basically a living creature with a phenomenal amount of energy. Thus, since they are a living creature, they cannot escape from reason. Even if a vast amount of energy is contained within their body. No matter what miraculous technique they use, since that is backed by the use of energy, then I just have to make them expend all that energy. That's the reason for this combat arena. That's the reason for the Gloria Type Ω. The Gloria Type Ω is specialised in wars of attrition. Whether it's for a day, for a week, or for a month, it can still continue to fight, with it's indestructible body. Once I've finished cleaning up outside, I'll keep company with you however long it takes. Until you die that is, Ariel.

Translation notes:

"rather than calling her a mere girl of a failed creation, I would have treated her as my real daughter" - Potimas frequently mocks Ariel as a "小娘" (komusume), which I've generally translated as "mere girl". These days this word is normally used as an insult towards a girl - eg "wench". However, the literal meaning is more like "young girl" or "little girl". By itself, 娘 (musume) can mean "girl" but generally means "daughter".

"Bait-and-switch" - the literal term here is "match pump" which is short for "lighting a match and then putting it out with a water pump". Or in other

words: creating a problem (poison) then introducing a solution (poison resistance) and trying to take credit for the solution. It's more or less the flip side of "bait-and-switch".

Regarding poison being "fake" within the System, this came up previously in chapter 214.

Elf Village Battle ⑦

Author's note: Potimas's perspective

I'm using the Type Ω. But to say that I had no doubts about that decision, would be incorrect. The Type Ω is an anti-Gyuriedistodiez specialised battle weapon. To put it plainly, it doesn't have a good affinity with Ariel. I don't know whether or not it can be used in this magecraft jamming field, but she has Gluttony. The Type Ω has a colossal amount of internal energy. However, it's not infinite. If a battle continued on long enough it would run out, and if there is external interference then it's natural that it would run out faster. Gluttony is likely capable of absorbing even that internal energy. Naturally, I have not been able to analyse every single skill. Even though I have the magecraft jamming field, I'm not able to relax.

Without doubt, the Type Ω cannot be defeated by Ariel, no matter how poor affinity it has. The Type Ω's combat abilities are, when converted to theoretical System status values, a physical offensive ability of 150,000, a physical defensive ability of 100,000 and a speed of 150,000. Due to the use of Appraisal obstruction from Ruler Authority, Ariel's status values haven't been accurately determined, but it shouldn't be possible for them to exceed 100,000. In which case, she can't overcome the gap with simple physical ability alone. And in practice, Ariel is being nicely dealt with by the Type Ω.

「HAAAAH!」

Through the monitor, Ariel yells while unleashing her fist. But, the Type Ω leisurely evades. In a counterattack, it strikes at Ariel's body with its arm. It's no ordinary arm either. The Type Ω's arm rotates like a drill, and part of Ariel's body is torn off. With a part of her body turned into a bloody mess, Ariel's small body becomes even more lightweight. With about half her abdomen having disappeared, Ariel takes some distance without hesitation.

When it comes to fighting with a god, after considering what could be the most efficient form of attack, the result was this drill. With a slash attack, the

cut portions only need to be reconnected. With a bludgeon attack, the broken portions only need to be restored. With a piercing attack, the damaged region is too narrow in the first place. Against a monster that can completely regenerate from being smashed to smithereens in an instant, using such physical attacks doesn't have that much meaning. Particularly since that requires having enough destructive power to be able to smash the body to smithereens in the first place. However, such excessive destructive power is a waste of energy.

Whether it's an action for attack or defense, it consumes energy. If an attack consumes 100 points of energy, then to defend against that the defending side must likewise also consume 100 points of energy. If the original strength of the materials is included in the calculation, then such a simple scheme doesn't really work though. In any case, the more the opponent increases their offensive power, the more energy will be used for defense in proportion to that. However, that changes beyond a certain point. There's a point beyond which it becomes more economical to receive the damage and heal the wound, rather than defend against it. If you think about it, it's obvious. We're talking about a monster that can revive even from having its body blown to smithereens. In other words, there's enough energy kept in stock within the body such that being blown to smithereens isn't a problem. For the sake of argument, if the amount of energy required to revive from being blown to smithereens is 10,000 points, in the case that 10,001 or more points of energy are used in attack, rather than foolishly waste 10,001 points of energy to defend against that it would save 1 point of energy to revive from it instead. In turn, it means that in order to make the opponent on defence use up 10,000 points of energy, the one on the attacking side spent 10,001 of energy. Which means that despite making an attack, more energy was actually expended instead.

Due to such a phenomenon occurring, expending too much energy in an attack against a god is a poor plan. It is preferable to use a low cost means of attack that still forces the opponent to spend energy. On that point, the drill is a wonderfully efficient method of attack. It's possible to adjust the energy consumption to meet the opponent's defensive power, and on top of that, if the defense can be penetrated then it's possible to cause a major injury. The larger the wound that can be created, the larger the energy required to restore

it. Although the results might seem meagre against a god who can even revive from being blown to smithereens, as the costs pile up they become massive. “Low cost, low return”. However, the return is guaranteed to be larger.

In addition, Ariel is not a god. With this setup that was prepared to take on a god, for a mortal like Ariel, no matter how good an affinity she has with the Type Ω, it’s ultimately hopeless. The only thing that I’m concerned about, is the possibility of wasting the Type Ω’s internal energy. After gathering so much precious energy, it would be galling if more than the expected amount of energy was consumed in fighting Ariel. But, like I said to Ariel, I consider her to be a worthy opponent. Enough that I decided that it’s worth playing my strongest card against her as a tribute.

「Potimas-sama. How do you wish to proceed with the counter attack outside?」

「I’ll leave it to you.」

Which is why, when my subordinate transmitted a request for instructions, I left it all to them. I have no intention of taking my eyes off of Ariel, displayed on this monitor. It’s fine to leave the minor matters outside to my subordinates. At most, the only ones that are a cause for concern are the Queen Taratekt and the one called Shiro. Considering that both of them together could not possibly match Ariel, there is no need for me to deal with them personally. For now, I want to concentrate on seeing the last moments of my ancient enemy with my own eyes.

Ariel puts a hand over the lost part of her abdomen, and is breathing heavily. Just by breathing in the air that’s laden with carbon dioxide, her physical condition will worsen though. Because of the magecraft jamming field, even the possibility of healing an injury is doubtful. Naturally. That’s the reason for the magecraft jamming. That’s the reason for the carbon dioxide. Using the magecraft jamming to put a limit on the combat abilities and recovery abilities of a god, and using carbon dioxide to force them to gradually waste energy, and finally to accelerate that using the Type Ω. In order to kill a god, I thoroughly prepared this battle formation despite not being a god. Not being a god, it is impossible for Ariel to defeat it.

「AHHHH!」

Once again, the Type Ω attacked Ariel. The drill pierced Ariel's chest, opening a large hole. However, Ariel was prepared to take that attack in order to grab the Type Ω with her left hand, and constrain it.

「I caught... you.」

Until that point, the Type Ω's speed had made sport of Ariel's attacks, and she hadn't connected even once. In order to land a strike on the Type Ω, Ariel purposely took an attack from the Type Ω huh. Ariel's right hand is clenched tightly. She unleashes a powerful right straight. Caught by her left hand, the Type Ω wasn't able to evade. The blow made with all her might lands on the Type Ω. Her clenched fist drives into the head section of the Type Ω, which explodes like a balloon despite being metal. Continuing further, the impact was transmitted through the body, and the Type Ω's entire body was scattered as if it had detonated.

「How'd you like that huh.」

Ariel smiles as if in triumph. That's in spite of the large holes that have been opened in her abdomen and chest, which would be fatal to a living creature. However, it's unfortunate for her.

「It's unfortunate, but I wouldn't think it's over yet.」

In front of Ariel's eyes, the smashed up body of the Type Ω begins to revive. Without even taking a second, the body returns to the uninjured state that it had until just now. If a god can do it, then there's no reason why a creature with a similar amount of energy invested cannot. All the more so because unlike a living creature, the Type Ω is a simple lump of metal. It's merely being remote controlled by magecraft. The complex structure of a living creature versus a simple lump of metal. Naturally, the former requires a greater amount of energy to revive. Efficiently force the opponent to consume energy, resulting in a smaller loss for us. Keep making the same investment over a long period. That's the essence of the Type Ω.

「The second round is getting started.」

Together with those words, the Type Ω rushes towards Ariel again. It might end with the second round. She's hardly likely to last until the final round. But then again, that final round would never be reached, since this is a hell of

infinite rounds after all.

Chapter 296 - Elf Village Battle ⑧

The countless number of sea urchins floating in the sky. The huge triangular pyramid in the center of them. Somehow, it's a scene that really makes me want to say "go do it in space!". Nai wa.

To everyone living on this planet, I'm sorry. You've sure worked hard. Well, if there's some weirdo out there who's delighted with allowing those things to float around, all the saved up energy won't last. I had wondered "hey, just how much energy did you grab to make even one of those sea urchins", but considering the amount gathered here then the world could have been saved once or twice over long ago. Or rather, this world sure has been put through such unbridled and continuous exploitation for so long huh. I guess that's proof of just how hard the inhabitants of this world have been working. Seriously, they've really worked so hard!Well, despite all that, there's no change in what I need to do though.

『All members, emergency evacuation』

Via telepathy, I send an evacuation order to all divisions. It would be hard for vampire girl or oni-kun to face those sea urchins as well. Against those sea urchins which even the Queen couldn't do anything about without my assistance, since there's too many floating around to even count, this is a case of "he who fights and runs away, lives to fight another day". Besides, since I'm about to get serious, they might get caught up in it as well.

On that point, Mera is excellent. Before I had given my evacuation order, he had already made the army retreat. Beforehand, I had already warned him not to overdo it if an unexpected situation occurs, but he still took prompt action even so. Since he immediately evacuated once he felt danger, with one thing and another, I guess Mera might be the best general we have amongst us all.

Using the bile sisters, I secure the reincarnators. I toss them into another dimension. It seems that two of them were taking independent action, but I had them nabbed and secured as well. Good. With this I can now turn the entire area into a battlefield without worry.

Now then, time to get serious eh? Darn it. I had wanted to avoid revealing the full scope of my power if possible, but now's not the time for that unfortunately.

While I was making all those preliminary arrangements, a corner of the triangular pyramid begins to glow. It's a **** Motion Gun, huh? Yup, it's a **** Motion Gun! As I had expected, a moment later that light was fired at me as a heavy laser beam. Yeah yeah, it's death chute from another dimension time. Okay then, right back at you! The heavy laser beam heading towards me is swallowed up by the gate to another dimension that appears in front me. Then, that laser exits from the gate that appeared beside the first one, and is fired at the triangular pyramid. Anyone who can make use of other dimensions would think of this, right! To transfer a long distance attack via dimensions and to return it on the opponent!

The laser that the triangular pyramid itself fired hits itself. But, I guess it's to be expected, as it seems that the triangular pyramid had a barrier up, and the laser is repelled in a dazzling flash of light. I guess that would probably be a barrier that combined a magecraft jamming field with reflection, huh? The laser is repelled by the barrier and scattered into shards in all directions. Then on impact, those shards are annihilated.

.....That was way too powerful. What the heck? At the point of impact the ground itself vanished, okay? Rather than making a crater, it made a hole instead. Are you physically trying to wreck this planet? I thought it was a **** Motion Gun, but it was the **ath Star's super laser. Just how much energy was wasted by that one shot?

I'm glad that I didn't consider trying to defend against that thing. There's no way I could defend against that I bet. Heh, even so, long distance strikes against me are futile! I'll simply return the whole damn lot of them right at you! Well, I'm gonna sink this lot before a second strike comes though.

I sneak a quick glance at Kuro. He's being dragged away by oni-kun. Perhaps he noticed my glance, as he was glancing over his shoulder, and then quickly resumed escaping. For now, it seems like he's not planning on intervening in this battle. While that part is okay, it's regrettable that I'm being forced to reveal my cards though. However, if I was asked whether I could overcome all

this without getting serious, it sure would be a hard task. Well, it's not like I couldn't do it if I had enough time, but if I took such leisurely action, this whole region wouldn't just be turned into scorched earth, it would be completely annihilated.

Take a deep breath. Now it's my turn. Saying so, it's goodbye from me and into another dimension I go. Nyahaha. No matter how powerful a beam it might fire, if it can't cross dimensions then it won't reach me! Using dimensions is cowardly you say? It means that I can do whatever I like against an opponent who doesn't have the ability. Well, this is exactly why having the ability to manipulate dimensions is indispensable for gods of course. It seems like I'm particularly specialised with my abilities in this regard though.

Now then, let's lift the lid on the cauldron of hell. The triangular pyramid and sea urchins are floating in the sky. Higher up in the sky from them, dimensional fissures appear. Those fissures spread out in a pattern like a spider's web, covering the skies above the forest where the elf village is. Then, a countless number of eyes peek out from those fissures, facing the ground. A myriad of eyes gaze down upon the ground. They are my clones with the Evil Eye of Gluttony.

The swarm of clones simultaneously activate the Evil Eye of Gluttony, greedily eating up the energy from the triangular pyramid and the sea urchins. The triangular pyramid and the sea urchins all shoot attacks up at the clones, but they're obstructed by the spider web shaped dimensional fissures, and not a single attack reaches the clones. Indeed, the dimensions are fully isolated. Of course they won't reach. In the meantime, having had their energy eaten, the sea urchins start dropping to the ground.

This is me being serious. Fully utilising my dimensional abilities, first I sequester countless clones in another dimensional My Home, then one-sidedly squeeze the energy out from my opponents with the Evil Eye of Gluttony. Even if the opponent is a god, once they've run out of energy they're an ordinary living creature. Since having an unbelievable amount of energy for a living creature is what qualifies a god as a god, if that is taken away then they can't be called a god. As an incomplete novice god, this is the strategy I devised to take on Kuro.

Or rather, this is all I could do. After all, I'd lose for certain in a direct fight. Therefore, I had no option but to thoroughly expand my hand of available cards. Basically, this is all I could do. There's not many things I can do that could reasonably be called god-like. Even so, this is the new My Home strategy that I've continuously refined in order to defeat the higher ranking god that is Kuro. A bunch of mere elven weapons had no chance of defeating it.

Once again I check on Kuro. Yikes. He's totally looking. Please stop, please don't look. Since this is all I can do, if he develops a way to counter it then I'll be checkmated. Which is exactly why I didn't want to do this. Pretty please, don't counter it okay?

While I was making such a wish, all the sea urchins had fallen to the ground, and in the end the triangular pyramid also dropped to the ground without power.

Translation notes:

“**** Motion Gun” - 〇動砲 in the Japanese, obviously a reference to the Wave Motion Gun (波動砲).

Chapter 297 - Elf Village Battle ⑨

「Ariel! What the, what the heck is that!?!」

Sounding as if he's at his wit's end, Potimas's voice resounds. At the same time, the robot that had been completely dominating me stops moving.

「If you just say “that”, how am I supposed to know what you mean? Unless you use a concrete expression I can't understand what you're saying you know.」

Acting dumb, I deliberately shrug my shoulders and shake my head in confusion. In a normal situation I'm sure he would readily turn aside my joking attitude, but I guess he's really at his wit's end, as I can hear the sound of him grinding his teeth through the speaker.

「That person called Shiro! What the heck is that!?!」

Naturally. Yep, I knew it. While saying that I didn't understand what he meant by “that”, of course I knew. In the first place, it's unimaginable for someone to be able to bring about a situation that would make Potimas so flustered, aside from Shiro-chan.

Still, Potimas is staggeringly flustered. Perhaps this is the first time that I've ever heard Potimas expose so much emotion and yell so much? Potimas normally looks down on other people, and doesn't display any particular emotions. Because no matter what the people he's looking down on try to do, he doesn't have to bother with it. Precisely because he looks down on others, it seems that he thinks it's embarrassing for his emotions to be affected by others. Which is why, even when he does feel emotions, he doesn't reveal them.

Despite all that, currently he's losing his mind. This must be due to some situation occurring that completely went beyond Potimas's assumptions. Yep, Shiro-chan is capable of that.

「What's up? What has Shiro-chan been up to then?」

I doubt he'll give me an answer, but I'll try asking since I'm curious.

「I'm the one asking the questions! Hurry up and answer what that is!」

He's already shrieking. Hmm. I'm a bit dejected here. I'd wanted to make him start yelling like that myself though. Shiro-chan has beaten me to the punch I guess.

「While I don't know what happened, I guess you've been beaten by Shiro-chan or something huh? I'm like, so sorry. Sucks to be you.」

Against my jeering, the robot that had stopped moving until now suddenly starts attacking me again. I take a backstep to avoid the rage induced wild swings.

「Upset? Angry? My, what a short temper. Maybe you've not had enough calcium in your diet? This is the problem with frail kids who shut themselves inside.」

Against my provocations the robot charges at me transparently like a idiot.

「Shit! Shit! Shit! Where did my calculations go wrong? There's no reason for such a person to exist though!」

The pathetic sound of him heaping abuse on himself reverberates. How fragile. I'd already known about it, but this man sure is weak. Potimas's "strength", was in only ever facing opponents that were weaker than himself until now. It wasn't that Potimas was actually strong, but just that his opponents were weaker. That's why he felt strong. That's why he acted composed. But, I knew all along. This man, is actually weaker than anyone. Precisely because he's weaker than anyone, he sought power more than anyone. This mere shadow of that former self is the current Potimas. Misunderstanding strength and about becoming strong, this man is as weak as ever. Having faced Shiro-chan, someone who is stronger than himself, he's revealed his true colours and his weakness can be seen.

「How weak.」

「Say what?」

Catching my brief mutter with his sharp ears, Potimas responds with a threatening voice.

「Potimas, you sure are weak.」

I hadn't really intended for him to hear my muttering, but since he asked I'll clearly spell it out for him.

「I sure don't want to hear that from someone who is satisfied with the transient power of the System.」

I wasn't talking about being strong or weak in that meaning though. But even if I said that I'm sure this man wouldn't get it.

「That's right, the System. What about reaching godhood. Couldn't that have become a god! But, what is that? And in that case, why? Ahh, shit! Dammit!」

I can't even tell what he's saying any more, as Potimas repeatedly heaps incoherent abuse on himself. Perhaps influenced by the controller, the robot's movements become incoherent as well. The drill is thrown towards my face. I stop it with my teeth. There's a horrible grinding noise, but I ignore it and put strength into my jaw, biting off the drill.

「Wait. Wait, wait, wait! That's right, why? Why are you still alive?」

Oh? He finally noticed?

「How have you healed? In this magecraft jamming field, how can you fight on equal terms with the Gloria Ω? What's going on!?!」

You're slow on the uptake. My body was wrecked by the robot's drill. My abdomen was gouged out, my chest was pierced, my arm was torn off, my leg was shredded. However, those wounds have already healed.

「It can't be, it can't be that you have as well!? Does this mean that you have become a god as well!?!」

Potimas is shouting at the top of his lungs. He'd been utterly looking down on me until now, yet he fears that I've ascended to godhood before him while he's sought it all this time. I'm sure that would be the greatest possible humiliation to Potimas.

「You're wrong.」

However, unfortunately that's wrong. I haven't become a god. I can't become a god. If it was that easy to become a god, even Potimas should have become a

god long ago.

「It's not the case that I have become a god. However, just for a moment, I am capable of producing a strength that can compete with the gods. You know what method I'm referring to, surely?」

The robot takes a step back. Being like that, Potimas seemed to shrink before me.

「It can't be.」

「Oh yes it can.」

「Are you sane?」

That's a cruel way to put it. Well, I'm sure that from Potimas's point of view it would be devoid of reason though. Which is why I said that you are weak. I'm pretty weak as well, but I believe I have the courage to put my life on the line in order to achieve my goal.

「Humility.」

My newly acquired skill of the Seven Virtues. Due to its ability, I can temporarily obtain an ability that compares with the gods.

When my soul fused with a fragment of Shiro-chan's soul, the former body-in-charge, my soul increased in volume accordingly. At the time, my soul was already filled to bursting, like a container that was cracking on the verge of exploding. As if mending those cracks, Shiro-chan's soul permeated through. Thanks to that, I was able to gain new skills that were once beyond my reach. Like Telepathy for example, a skill that I hadn't needed until then due to being a loner. And what I took at the end was the skill of Humility. This skill that I've kept secret from everyone except Shiro-chan, is my secret weapon.

I won't hesitate at all in using this secret weapon. Even if it will burn away my very soul.

『Humility: n% power capable of reaching the gods. By consuming one's soul, a power that can even compare with the gods can be temporarily gained. In addition, the W System is surpassed and the the right to interfere with the MA Area is obtained. 』

Translation notes:

“Maybe you’ve not had enough calcium in your diet” - I’m not sure about the real scientific basis, but in Japan it’s common to blame anger and similar emotions on a lack of calcium.

“Telepathy” - in chapter 170 when we see Ariel’s skills through Appraisal, the “telepathy” skill was not listed. We first see Ariel use telepathy in chapter 201.

Chapter 298 - Elf Village Battle ⑩

As the robot begins to regenerate the broken drill, I grab its head and immediately sink my teeth into it. The bitter taste of metal spreads through my mouth. That only lasts for a moment though, as what I had bitten off in my mouth is disintegrated, and transformed into pure energy.

My Gluttony skill works properly within my mouth at least. While it means I need to get things into my mouth first, so long as I can get it into my mouth then it gets disintegrated into energy no matter what it is, and I can then absorb that. It makes no difference that it's built to be an anti-god robot. While the amount of energy that I can snatch in one mouthful is small, it should be more efficient than simply continuing to punch it endlessly.

I've already figured out the rough design of this robot. At any rate it's a war-of-attrition type that has been infused with plenty of energy. Relying upon its quantity of energy, it's made to be tough enough to instantly regenerate no matter how hard it's beaten up. Excess functions are excluded, and it's specialised only in efficiency. At the same time the combination of the magecraft jamming field and the poisonous gas exhausts the opponent. I see, I see. It might be in a roundabout way, but if you consider what kind of strategy has the potential of defeating a god, it makes pretty good sense. Even while I'm actually using Humility, it's still a real struggle. As for whether it would really work in practice against Gyurie I don't know, but what I can tell is that Potimas has really thought long and hard about perfecting this battle formation. Precisely for that reason, and because I am the opponent, that will be the reason for its defeat.

I thrust into the robot's torso with a spear hand. Then, I activate magic inside the robot's body. The magecraft jamming field is not omnipotent either. For the interior of living bodies inside the field, and in particular, for the interior of allies where the activation of magecraft must not be jammed, the effect does not reach. Well of course, since the robot regenerates using magecraft, jamming that would turn it into a simple lump of metal. Unlike Shiro-chan, I'm not

capable of actually analysing the construction for neutralising the magecraft jamming on the robot, but even without such laborious methods I am able to activate magic. So long as it's inside the robot.

What I activated, was level 10 Heresy Magic. Its name is Soul Break. Heresy Magic is magic that directly acts upon the opponent's soul. And, Soul Break is magic that destroys the opponent's soul. I drive that into the robot.

The robot becomes wild as if it hated that, and it slams the side of my face. Along with the nasty sound of my cheekbones breaking, I'm blown away and separated from the robot. I quickly regain my stance, watching out for pursuit from the robot. However, the pursuit doesn't come, and instead the robot took a vigilant stance as if being cautious.

That worked, huh. Well, it was something I already knew about already. Energy dwells within the soul. Without the container called the soul, the energy will quickly dissipate. The ones with an extremely large soul container are gods. To kill a god, you either need to destroy the container called the soul, or to cause all the energy inside it to be consumed.

Potimas chose the method of causing the energy to be consumed. He chose it, or rather, he didn't have any other method available. Like I just did, it's also possible to use Soul Break to destroy the soul. However, that's simply because I could borrow the System's power. Without the System's support I can't use Soul Break. Even Shiro-chan has yet to be able to reproduce Soul Break after all. So Potimas also wouldn't be able to reproduce Soul Break without the System's assistance. Therefore, Potimas could only choose a different method.

It's not like Potimas wouldn't be able to use Soul Break either. All he'd have to do is make the elves learn Heresy Magic after all. However, Potimas would never choose to do that. After all, Potimas doesn't even trust the elves. To Potimas, the elves are convenient tools. Tools that must be safe to use. Thus, he won't let them learn anything that could become even slightly harmful to him. So for Potimas, Heresy Magic is a two-edged sword. That my Heresy Magic worked on the robot is good proof of that. Against this robot which is Potimas's secret weapon, since Heresy Magic is effective, it should also be effective against Potimas himself. In the theoretical case where Gyurie was the opponent, having one or two people learn Heresy Magic would be a drop in the

bucket. Taking on him would surely require hundreds of people to learn it else it likely wouldn't be effective enough. If Potimas had that many people learn Heresy Magic, then what if they rose in revolt against him? Since he would worry about such things, he wouldn't be able to take such measures.

It's often said that it's lonely being a king, but it's a bit different with Potimas. He's alone by choice. He's satisfied with being shut in his confined miniature garden. Because as long as he's inside that miniature garden, he can be number one. Because as long as he's inside that miniature garden, whatever he does is forgiven. Really, what a petty man. Because of which, he's a sleazebag.

「Potimas. To make this robot, just how many people's souls were used?」

Since I can hear Potimas muttered groans over the speakers, I'm not expecting some kind of decent reply. However, I just wasn't able to keep quiet. Energy dwells within souls. Since it has energy, it means that this robot has souls within it. Also, there is a threshold for how much energy can be saved up in souls. A threshold that Potimas and I were unable to exceed. This robot was specifically granted energy under the assumption that Gyurie was the opponent. That amount of energy cannot possibly be retained by a single person's soul. If he'd been able to do that, then Potimas would have become a god long ago. Therefore, this robot has several, no, several dozen people's souls infused into it. All their souls have been reconstructed into this metal body.

I pity you all. But, I won't go easy on you. For Soul Break to destroy a soul, it means that it returns to nothingness rather than rejoining the cycle of reincarnation. Quite literally, a heretical magic. Even so, I will not hesitate in making use of this. It's not like I have the luxury to choose otherwise either. Gluttony and Soul Break, and finally the time limited Humility. I will use these to overcome Potimas.

「Sorry.」

To these pitiful souls that were reduced to a weapon I give a single word of apology, then I took a step forwards.

Translation notes:

“Soul Break” - skills with this word (破魂) have appeared before, though not in pure spell form. Eg the “Evil Eye of Soul Break” in chapter 119 or how the

“Heresy Attack” skill uses the “Soul Break” attribute in chapter 110. “Break Soul” or “Rend Soul” would be a more literal translation though.

“Quite literally, a heretical magic” - the Japanese word for “heresy” or “heretical” more literally means “off the [proper] path”. As Ariel said, it takes souls outside the (proper) cycle of reincarnation.

Chapter 299 - Elf Village Battle ⑪

I wonder how much time has passed. I feel that the battle has continued for quite a long time, from my perspective. But, it's possible that my sense of time was lengthened and it was like that only in my subjectivity, and that in fact the actual amount of time might be unexpectedly short.

I'm not sure how many times I've done this now but once again I make a strike. My spear hand pierces the robot's chest, and the Heresy Magic that I activated inside destroys a soul dwelling within there. The robot trembles once as if convulsing, then its movement stopped completely. Even after I withdraw my hand, the hole that I had created doesn't regenerate, and having lost its support the body feebly collapses to the ground. The crashing sound it makes is unexpectedly light, giving the impression of being an empty shell of an instrument that had lost its significance by losing its souls.

It's over. No, not yet. Even if this robot is Potimas's secret weapon, it's not actually Potimas himself. Until I give Potimas himself his last rites, it won't be over.

That being said, that sure was painful. I might look perfectly unharmed in appearance, but on the inside I'm a total wreck. That's because the effect of Humility is to consume the soul. While the energy that I was able to steal from the robot helped cushion the effect somewhat, that's only at the level of being better than nothing. If I canceled the effect of Humility, it might be bad. I guess this is like how a candle burns brightest just before its flame burns out huh. Please, let me last until I have dealt with Potimas.

——If you're done then come outside——

That voice resounds directly within my head. I guess it's a message from Shiro-chan? Despite the magecraft jamming field still being active, I wish she wouldn't make doing that seem so easy. I'm losing my confidence here.

Anyhow, for Shiro-chan to go out of her way to call me, I guess it means that I had better go outside, right. I forcibly wrench open the door that had closed

over the entrance when I arrived. Just what you'd expect of something made to shut in a god, I sure had a hard time opening it. I was wheezing after opening the door, then wheezing again as I climbed up the long slope, reaching the outside world.

What I saw there, was something completely beyond my expectations. The forest was blazing here and there. In the places where flames were burning, there were these large round objects lying there that I couldn't really figure what they were. Within that spectacle that was like something from hell, there was the silhouette of something enormous standing out prominently. As if covering the sky, an enormous disc shaped object was floating there.

If I was to express it in a single word from Shiro-chan's memories, I would call it a UFO. That thing rumoured to actually have space aliens riding it. However, that expression is not necessarily wrong. That floating disc, is evidently a space ship after all.

There's no way that Potimas wouldn't know about the current state of this planet. The reason why Potimas is obsessed about this planet that is like a house of cards, is because the System is here. Although he was making heavily abusive statements about the System just earlier, that's precisely because his expectations have been betrayed. Potimas had expectations of the System. That perhaps it could make him a god. However, Potimas couldn't become a god. Even so, betting on that ray of hope, Potimas remained on this planet. Hoping that one day maybe he would be able to become a god.

However, Potimas himself should have been aware that there was only a faint hope of that. Therefore, it's natural that he was prepared. To escape from this planet, that is. Potimas was ready to leave this planet at any time. For that reason, he could calmly do things that were capable of ruining the planet. What's floating in the sky right now, is basically his means of escaping this planet.

But then again, that means of escaping, has been rendered immobile by white threads though. Just as if it was a bug caught in a spider's web that could do nothing except wait to be devoured. Yeah. That's actually so true it makes me want to smile.

Shiro-chan, you're something amazing. While I was playing with that robot, just what the heck were you doing? You did such an amazing job I can't express it in words.

Potimas is in there for certain. When I was fighting with that robot, part-way through I stopped hearing Potimas's voice. Meaning that he had abandoned the robot and was trying to escape already. Even that robot, despite all the time and effort that he spent on it, is just another tool in the end, from Potimas's point of view. If it was in exchange for his own life, it's clear that Potimas wouldn't worry about his choice even in the slightest, basically.

Amongst the threads that are binding the space ship, there is one stuck to the ground right next to me. The thread is thick enough for a single person to walk along without a problem. On taking a quick look around the area, I see no sign of Shiro-chan. However, since this thread is obviously telling me what to do, well, let's just get on with it then.

I climb up the thread, using it as a foothold. It seems like I've been doing nothing but climb up for a while now. I'm alert for some kind of counterattack from the space ship, but without anything occurring I quickly reach it. I guess it has already been rendered powerless by Shiro-chan huh. Climbing onto the space ship itself, I look for something like a hatch. Sure enough I find one before long and rip it off, and go inside.

The interior is surprisingly dark. There's no illumination. Well, that doesn't matter to me though since I have the Night Vision skill.

I walk on. As expected from its size, the passages are also stupidly long.

I walk on. Through glass windows I saw facilities that seemed like factories and plantations. I'm sure that the interior of this ship is laid out so that people can occupy it fully. Because they very well might need to spend centuries wandering through space after all. Maybe it's not just because of his expectations for the System that Potimas didn't leave this planet, but also because he was uncertain about the future. This planet only has the god called Gyurie, but other planets might have many gods. Considering that, he couldn't afford to be careless.

I walk on. There's defense orientated robots swarming around, but they're

hopelessly weak compared to the one I fought underground just now. I rout them. What I realise from dealing with the other robots, is that the one I fought underground, Gloria Type Ω or whatever, is very clearly a special one.

I walk on. While screaming something strange, one of Potimas's clones attacked me. He had had a handsome face, but it turned into something nasty due to impatience and terror. I've killed many of Potimas's clones up to this point, but none of them had such a warped expression. While he's not bothered about however many of his disposable clones are killed, he's clearly that worried about the possibility of his main body being killed. Well, naturally. I quickly finish off the attacking clone. No matter how much they're strengthened by machines, I'm already far beyond what these mere clones can handle.

「In short, you're checkmated.」

I walked and walked, and when I finally arrived, he was there. The body of an elderly elf, inside a transparent cylinder. That body had countless tubes attached. Perhaps because some kind of peculiar subject matter is clotting those pipes, the old elf doesn't even twitch.

「Stop! Stop, stop, stop! I don't want it to end! It can't end here! I must live on for eternity! I beg you! Please stop!」

Well, instead of moving, his screams are surging out from the speaker though. Along with the continuous entreaties to stop that are being emitted from the speaker, there's also a meaningless scream mixed in. Since he doesn't need to breathe, he can scream continuously as well. To Potimas, a body is not a container for living in, but something that simply needs to be alive. When he wants to move about he can just use his clones.

This lump of flesh that simply lives without stirring at all within that cylinder, this is what Potimas's main body is. I had guessed that he might have ended up like this, but when I see it for real it sure is a miserable form. Stubbornly living on, this man who pursued nothing but that - this is his fate.

「I don't want to die! I don't want to die! No-o-o! I don't want to diieieie!」
「Unfortunately Potimas, I have a much crueler fate in store for you than death.」

I won't sympathise with the continuously screaming Potimas. Having said that though, I don't have a sense of "it serves you right" either. I had expected something more to well up than this, but I feel nothing at all, to the extent that it surprises me.

「Abyss Magic」

Hearing my muttered words, Potimas starts screaming in an even greater frenzy. Abyss Magic is a unique magic. Compared to Heresy Magic that destroys the soul, Abyss Magic decomposes the soul, and contributes it back to the System. Simply killing him, isn't enough. This man, to his very soul, must make recompense to this world.

I begin the preparations for Abyss Magic. Unlike Heresy Magic, Abyss Magic requires a sophisticated magic construction. I believe that D-sama most likely did that deliberately. Heresy Magic was established to confront gods. Abyss Magic was created in order to deliver judgement between the people of this world. Dispossessing them of the choice of being able to reincarnate, and delivering the judgement of forcibly contributing to the System. Meaning, doing that is considered to be better for the world than having them reincarnate. The invocation takes a long time, which makes me secretly think that this is proof that this was never intended to be used in battle.

「Bye bye, Father.」

I invoke the Abyss Magic towards Potimas's main body, who is no longer saying anything intelligible and simply screaming. Then, only silence remained.

Translation notes:

"Father" - since this is a once off special case, I translated "otou-san" as "father" here.

Chapter 300 - The End Of The Battle, And Then.....

The clones monitoring the System sensed that the Diligence framework had become vacant. I quickly make arrangements to fill the void left in the Ruler Authority, making adjustments so that the operation of the System is not affected. In addition, I forcibly push my own existence into the vacated Ruler authority framework. With this, only one more framework is needed.

For the Diligence framework to have become vacant, is equivalent to saying that Potimas has died. Died, or rather extinguished, huh. I guess there is a certain karma in that Potimas, who only wanted to live on and never die, had a fate worse than death. He built up so much karma that it's a problem.

I break into the UFO that was rendered immobile by my threads. This UFO came out after I shot down the sea urchins and triangular pyramid. Given the timing with which it came out, I thought that this would have to be Potimas's last stand so I captured it instead of shooting it down, and it seems that my expectation was correct. If I'd been told that this in fact was another diversion then I'd have been surprised. If it had then I would have had to raise my evaluation of Potimas up by another step. Well, the fact that Potimas himself is dead, should mean that it really is over now.

At the end of this excessively long journey, I find the Demon King sitting on a chair and operating what appears to be a console in front of her.

「It's over.」

「I see.」

Without turning around, the Demon King spoke plainly. With her long running bond having been put to an end, I guess there would be various emotions surging inside of her. From her disinterested tone, it seems like instead that her emotions are overflowing so much that conversely she's become unable to understand her own emotions. It seems that when her emotions overflow too much, that instead her mood becomes impassive.

「Look at this.」

The Demon King points at something on the monitor. Glancing through the characters displayed, I see something worthless written there. An apotheosis experiment using the souls of reincarnators, huh.

Cutting this long-winded theory like thing short, it's an attempt to create a god by mixing the souls of reincarnators together. Potimas had already given up on using the System's power alone to become a god. No matter how much experience points in the form of souls he gathered, he wasn't able to break through the limit. In which case, he considered using a new type of experience points, in other words the souls of humans from another world, and by using the souls of the reincarnators, that perhaps it would be possible to break through the limit.

How worthless. Er, well, kinda. Basically I'm saying that I can't see any hope of this succeeding. Even if you gathered all the souls in this world, it still wouldn't be possible to break through the limit. So then just use souls from another world then huh!? If that could make a god then it wouldn't be so hard in the first place you know. Not that I have any right to say that after having become a god just like that though. So this is the reason why he was gathering the reincarnators huh. Sensei would never have imagined it.

「Well, surely even Potimas wouldn't seriously think that this could actually create a god though, right? It's probably just some "if by some chance" type of fleeting hope.」

「But, considering all that, he was incredibly careful about verifying the theory, and was creating equipment for it, it seems though?」

「Potimas's methods are beyond reason.」

In the words displayed on the monitor, there were minute details on the equipment under development, and the results of verifications performed in order to make the experiment a success. The reincarnators were forcibly put in an environment to make it as hard to gain skills as possible, and to prevent the souls from being transformed by the System on this world, it seems. How to put this - it's like catching sight of a great endeavor of painstaking detail, all in order to make an experiment with astronomically low odds actually succeed. I guess that's just how much he wanted to become a god huh. I'm sure he wanted it.

「It's fortunate that due to him being so cautious and careful that this was never put into practice eh. If we'd been just a year late, the equipment would have been completed and the reincarnators might have been tossed into the blender already.」

I wish you wouldn't say something so disturbing. However, the Demon King is correct. This time we were saved by Potimas being so cautious. Well, if he'd begun to make a move on the reincarnators, I would have hurried up the plan and launched a direct attack myself though.

「There's more than this - there's piles and piles of documents on the findings of Potimas's research.」

「Woah!」

I couldn't help saying that. Potimas's research findings. It seems that there's loads of worthless stuff.

「Therefore, once I've quickly verified the contents, we'll destroy them, right.」
「That's fine.」

If these things are left behind, it'll cause nothing but harm. Actually, I don't think there's any need for the Demon King to even verify them.

「This is how things are here, what about your side?」
「You're asking about everyone, right?」

I'd say everything's been properly sorted out. Collecting the wreckage of the sea urchins and triangular pyramid will soon be completed. The fires have been extinguished to prevent them from spreading further into the forest. In addition, the secret base hidden underground has been blown away without leaving any trace. Also,

「The only elf remaining is sensei alone.」

All the elves have been completely exterminated. There's still half-elves and quarter-elves remaining, but there's no longer any pure elves on this world.

「I see. Then, once this space ship has been destroyed, it really will be the end huh.」

「Deeply moved?」

「I guess so.」

Looking at her from the side as she said that, the Demon King's face was unusually gentle.

「Ah, that's right. I kept my promise.」

Promise? Ahh. The one where I said I won't forgive her if she dies.

「I've safely achieved my goals, boss.」

The Demon King turned around in her chair, and gave a jokey salute. Safely, huh.

「You call that safely?」

「So long as I'm not dead, it's a cheap price to pay.」

The Demon King replied with a smile. Even though she's currently on the verge of death, and can't even stand up from her chair.

There's no wounds on the Demon King's body. However, instead of on her body, there's deep wounds all over her soul. The once mighty presence of the Demon King, has now become awfully frail.

「What are your expectations?」

「Hmm. I think with a bit of rest I should be able to move well enough that it doesn't interfere with daily life. I can't move properly right now because I've exhausted my magic power. Once that recovers, then I'll be able to move right away.」

「In short, combat is impossible, huh.」

「Well, it's not impossible if I don't mind reducing my life span even further though.」

「Demon King.」

「I'm joking. Either way, my life won't last that long. I guess about a year. What remains is to live out my remaining days so that I can see it through with my own eyes.」

From the start, the Demon King didn't have that long left to live. However, she should have had much more time left still. Even so, with her life span further reduced by the current battle, she has one year left.

「My role here is done. To be honest, I had wanted to do more, but I'll leave the rest to you, Shiro-chan.」

「Leave it to me.」

「Then, let's get started?」

In response to the Demon King's question, I nod. As an enemy of the world, Potimas has been dealt with. Now begins the story to save the world. However, although I'll save the world, I'm not saying that I'll save humanity.

Therefore, I'm initiating actions that will make me an enemy of humanity. Now then, let's destroy humanity, and save the world and the Goddess. Even if doing so is against the Goddess's own will.



《Conditions met. Skill『Greed』was acquired》

《Conditions met. Title『Ruler of Greed』was acquired》

《By the effects of the title『Ruler of Greed』, skills『Appraisal LV10』and『Conquest』 were acquired》

「Teheh! He's dead! That asshole is dead! Ahh, with this, with this I'm finally free! Please wait for me onii-sama! Now that I have this power, I will be able to make onii-sama mine! He'll be all mine! Teheh, teheheheheheh!」

The Dreaming Boy

Author's note: from the point of view of Natsume Kengo

Oh look, I've died. Even though I'm referring to myself, the impression that comes to mind is that it's like someone else's problem. Well, I can't help it you see. It's something that happened in a dream after all. If this was reality then I'd be panicking though. Merely dying while dreaming, is something that'll end once I wake up.

At long last, this shitty dream has ended huh. It really was a shitty dream. Me being the prince of the Empire and so on is ridiculous beyond belief, right? I quickly realised that this was a dream. It has to be, right? This isn't just a dream, it's that thing. Right, a so-called lucid dream, yeah.

Once I realised that this was a dream I did whatever I wanted afterwards. Since it's just a dream after all. Since it's my dream anyhow, I can do what I want, right? Saying whatever selfish things I like, enjoying whatever luxuries I like. I'm a prince for a start, and everyone around me readily does whatever I tell them to do as well, so I guess there wasn't anything I couldn't do.

Well, saying that though, there was no smartphones or TV either, and the food was questionable so it didn't actually feel that luxurious though. No helping it I guess. The dream was set in a fantasy world after all. I guess it's strange for food to have taste despite being in a dream though. Or rather, since this is a dream and all, couldn't the meals at least be a bit tastier? Why were they so inflexible about such things. Even when I complained to the chef nothing changed anyway. I started missing my mother's cooking. That was enough to make me want to wake up from this dream already, but this dream really seems to be continuing on for bloody ever.

Being able to raise my level by defeating monsters felt like a game at first and was fun, but I still got bored with it after a while. Most of the monsters were just too weak, while it would take a long time to get to places with strong monsters. Since I was a prince and all they couldn't just allow me to go to dangerous places you know. Why is this damn dream so fussy about the minor

details? Since this is a dream after all, teleportation should at least be possible, right?

Just when I was getting seriously bored with it all I enrolled in an academy at some country. I hadn't expected much from that either. I had expected that at best it would only be fun at the start, and that once I had gotten used to the new environment then I would soon get bored with it. But, contrary to my expectations, there was something there that I hadn't had until now. To be precise, it was them.

Several of my classmates were there. Well, since this is my dream it wouldn't be strange for them to be here after all. However, whether it's Yamada or Ooshima, it was strange for it to be the ones who I wasn't particularly friendly with. Since this is my dream the first one to appear should be Issei, normally. Why isn't he around, darn it. Somehow even sensei turned up, yet while sensei seems to know where all the others are, she wouldn't tell me anything about Issei when I asked her about him.

While I can't accept Issei not being around, it's okay since there's others here that I do know. Maybe this dream that I'd gotten bored with will finally become fun. That's how I had thought at the beginning. But again, that was only at the beginning. My classmates at the academy were centered around Yamada at all times.

People naturally gathered around Yamada. On top of that, that bunch genuinely idolised Yamada. Yet the ones that gathered around me, were not those interested in me as an individual, but only those drawn by my title as prince of the Empire. Those types tried to approach Yamada as well, but they were turned away by Ooshima who was always together with him. Thanks to that he didn't have deal with complicated political powers, or those who associated with him on that basis, and could simply be relaxed all the time. That relaxed attitude attracted even more people, and they gathered around him.

I could only watch on from a short distance. That short distance was like an enormous wall blocking me. I knew. The fact that Yamada wasn't good at dealing with me. I'm at least self-aware to the extent that I know my own personality isn't particularly praiseworthy. When Issei isn't there for me, I'm more likely to create enemies than friends. Precisely because Issei was there, I

could be at the center of the boys like the leader of the pack. Because he always supported me, I was able to behave as myself. When he's not here, the only ones who gather around me are just a bunch of useless ones.

How can that Yamada be so happy, when I feel so empty? Why do I have to experience something so unpleasant in a dream? If you're going to dream you might as well have an enjoyable one. That's right, this is all a dream. In that case, I might as well just do whatever I like to my heart's content, right? It seems impossible to open up to Yamada after all this time anyway, so I might as well go completely hostile to him instead. Why don't we see who's better eh?

Yet, despite all my aspirations I was completely defeated. My pride is shredded. Since it was a dream after all I kept on escalating things, finally with an attempted assassination. Not only did I lose but I pathetically had my skills and status values stolen. I was made to seem like such a small-fry that it's laughable.

However, I'm not giving up. This is my dream after all. If I continue to desire it then someday that wish will be granted. Brandishing the power that I had gained that way, it was time for revenge. Wakaba-san is also cooperating with me, so this time I'll win for sure.

Huh? Come to think of it, when did Wakaba-san start cooperating with me again? My memory of that part is vague, but well, I guess that's how dreams are. In dreams it's common for the scene to suddenly change completely. A lucid dream is still a dream at least.

I fired myself up and had a rematch with Yamada. Having thrown down the gauntlet while brimming with confidence, the tables were easily turned on me. Hey, seriously? You're too strong, Yamada. What are you doing acting like the protagonist in my own dream. Swap places. It's laughable.

Then it all ended with my head being crushed by someone. Even in my last moments I was like a small-fry, dammit. It's so total that I could laugh continuously.

However, well, finally it's time to wake up from this weird dream. It was a shitty dull dream, but I guess this is a message telling me not to get too carried away huh? It must be. Once I wake up, maybe I'll keep humility in mind a bit

more. I'm always always doing whatever pops into my head, aren't I. Then every time it would be Issei cleaning up after me as well, so I better reflect on things

First of all, once I wake up I better say "good morning" to mother. I wonder what's for breakfast? I'm looking forwards to it. I wouldn't think that usually, but after seeing such a long dream maybe I'm feeling nostalgic.

Then, once I get to school I gotta tell Issei about this dream. I gotta complain to him about why he didn't turn up. I can just imagine Issei's face having an expression saying "what the heck are you talking about?"

That's right, I'll talk to Yamada about this as well. I'll tell him that in the dream he was seriously like a cool hero. That guy hates me, but maybe it'd be a good idea to use this chance to get along better with him. If Issei is there then surely I'll be able to take that step forwards. I guess Yamada might be a bit troubled if I suddenly start talking to him though.

Ahh. Won't I wake up already? I've returned. To reality. I can wake up. Quickly, wake.....

Translation notes:

"Issei" - Sakurasaki Issei. He is dead according to Oka-chan's Student List. He is referred to as "Natsume's stopper" in S22, the only guy Natsume seemed to acknowledge.

Past Arc ①

The man shakes the test tube. Filled with a red liquid, a small wave forms within the test tube. Using a micropipette, the red liquid inside the test tube is sucked up. With an experienced hand, the man transfers the contents of the micropipette to other test tubes one drop at a time. As each drop of the red liquid is added, the liquid chemicals in each test tube show a reaction every time. While observing that, the man progresses to the next experiment.

The man's hands never stop. The place the man is in resembles both a laboratory and also a hospital room. Due to having the facilities of both, either could be said to be correct, but if one was to specifically define what type of place the room was, it would be a laboratory. The reason being, is that the ones lying down on beds were not patients, but the man's experimental subjects - his laboratory animals.

The man, Potimas Hyphenath, turns his coldhearted gaze towards a girl lying down on a bed. His gaze is that of one towards a laboratory animal, without a trace of emotion. Even though she is his biological daughter.

From the reaction of the lined up test tubes, it is seen that there was no change compared to the previous day when the red liquid was added. However, it's not the case that no abnormality was seen. Within that red liquid, a small amount of toxin was detected. From the blood of the girl lying down on the bed.

It is not the case that Potimas administered poison to the girl. The girl's body was generating poison. However, that was not a function of a normal human body, and due to the generated poison contained within her blood stream, it had the effect of eating away at her own body. Due to her body being afflicted by this poison since she was born, it was inevitable that the girl experienced a life where she could not even properly get up from bed. However, if one was to ask whether the girl would be able to have an ordinary life if she had a healthy body instead, then the answer would be no. Due to her father being Potimas, and since she was not a proper human, it would be impossible for her to live an

ordinary life.

She was a laboratory animal. Even though she was Potimas's genetic daughter, since she was created by improper means she had no way of living except as a laboratory animal. Even so, it was unclear just how long her body that was being eaten away by poison would last. She was a chimera. The result of the insanity of mixing the genes of a human and an animal. She was one of the few successful examples. She was born as the result of an experiment to add animal characteristics to a human, by processing fertilised eggs. In appearance she was no different to a human, but her insides were irregular.

She had no name. However, based on the species of spider she had been combined with, in the form of a code name, she was called Taratekt.



From the moment he was first aware, Potimas Hyphenath was different to the other humans around him. To him, it was incomprehensible. How could people pass their time so leisurely? People die. That unavoidable fate visited everyone equally, whether they were a great person or whether they were a villain. Potimas was unbearably terrified of that. Always afraid of death, always thinking about death. For that reason, he found it unfathomable and unbelievable why everybody so rarely thought about death at all.

Why aren't they afraid? Why don't they resist?

Potimas did not want to die. Ever since infancy he was always dreading the moment that could come at any time. How could he avoid that ultimate reality? He continued to think about it through his entire childhood. Thus, he got involved with every single field of science. To find out whether or not there was a means of survival.

Starting from the conclusion - no field of science had a solution for how to avoid death. That was obvious. If a method was known, then there's no way that people wouldn't be aware of it. Since eternal youth and longevity is a dream desired by all, it was still a dream because it was impossible to achieve it. Moreover, that dream was something from what is called a fairy tale world. Since it was impossible to implement, there were few humans who seriously aimed to achieve it, and it was as lacking in authenticity as events from myths

and legends.

Even so, Potimas did not give up. If he gave up there, he would have to wait for the death that would come some day. He refused to do so. Therefore, Potimas seriously tried to complete it. The secret to achieving eternal youth and longevity.

He conducted his research using scientific methods based around cellular biology. Before reaching the age of 10, he had skipped grades and became a university student, and before he was 20 he became world famous due to his numerous discoveries. However, his main research had not borne any fruit. Sensing the limits of science alone, Potimas eventually began forbidden research. The field of research that humans could not handle, known as magecraft.

In this world there were mysterious creatures. There were many puzzles about their ecology, and human wisdom was inadequate to the task of explaining everything. Amongst those creatures, the one that stood out the most by far and was hidden by a strange veil, was the dragon.

Dragons only inhabited unexplored regions deep in the mountains, and were cut off from human contact. Any foolish attempts made at contact meant bringing their wrath down upon you. In the past, humans who tried to explain the mysteries of the dragons all received severe retaliation. For that reason, little was known about dragons. However, it was established that they possessed a technique that could cause phenomena that couldn't be explained by science. That was designated by people as "magecraft".

Potimas focused his attention on that. The reason being is that dragons had long lives. Dragons lived long enough that they were said to have eternal youth in legends. Researching the bodies of the long lived. Also, the unknown field of research called magecraft. If he could gain knowledge on those, then he could come closer to completing his research on eternal youth and longevity. With that conviction, Potimas set out to search dragons.

And that particular event became the prelude to ruin.

Translation notes:

“eternal youth and longevity” - this could also be translated as “immortality” but since there’s other words used within this story for “immortality” I specifically used this translation.

Past Arc ②

「Just who the heck was this idiot who committed the outrage of abducting an infant dragon?」

「It's said to be under investigation currently.」

Seated at the emergency conference, the one who moaned that while at his wits' end was the President who represented the country of Dazdoldia.

「What's the damage?」

「For now it's only gone as far as a warning, but if the search continues without progress then who knows.....」

「Is the search making progress?」

「It seems even the perpetrator's objective is unknown.」

「So in the end, it all depends upon the mood of the dragons huh.」

The President breathes a heavy sigh. An oppressive air enshrouds the conference room.

The origins of this began in an ally nation situated overseas in another continent, with an urgent appeal for support. According to them, “the dragons might rampage so we want you to dispatch reinforcements”.

Dragons. They are the creatures reigning at the summit of the ecosystem on this planet. Endowed with much greater intelligence than humans, endowed with much greater strength than humans, living for much longer than humans, and most of all, possessing the mysterious technique that humans cannot use called magecraft. In all regards they exceed humans by far, but they almost never meddle with humans. One of those rare exceptions is occurring. It was clearly an unusual situation. On inquiring for the details of the situation from the country requesting emergency aid, they were informed that there was an announcement from the dragons.

「An infant dragon has been abducted by humans. Immediately hand over the culprits, and safely return the infant dragon that was taken.」

That was the announcement from the dragons. At first, the ally nation that

received the notice was thrown into confusion. Not only was it a bolt from the blue, but beyond that it was because dragons were simply too terrible to go against. Dragons were sacrosanct creatures, never to be interfered with. That was considered common sense across all of humanity, and they had never expected that there would be a fool who would violate that. However, that announcement from the dragons was the reality. That unbelievable announcement that there was someone who had committed the outrage of abducting an infant dragon.

「Well then, Mr President. Shall we dispatch reinforcements?」

The Defence Secretary made that weighty inquiry. If the President gave the order to dispatch reinforcements, then as the one administering the military he would have to take action.

「Like hell!」

However, the Defence Secretary's concerns were blown away with a loud rebuke from the President.

「They're dragons you know? Have you forgotten the Tragedy of Tetmaia? Should the dragons go on a rampage, then it would be meaningless no matter how much our country reinforces them. The damage would simply be increased.」

The Tragedy of Tetmaia. That was an incident from the past, one of the few cases where their fury was demonstrated. In the country known as Tetmaia, a new type of bomb had successfully been developed, and of all things they dropped that in a region that dragons lived in. The new type of bomb had extraordinary power. Enough power to be able to genuinely rewrite the map. However, the reason why it is called the Tragedy, is because it became an opportunity for the fearsomeness of dragons to be demonstrated once again, as the damage brought about by that bomb was in no way a match for the dragons. As for why Tetmaia perpetrated such an outrage, nobody knows the truth. Because on the same day that the bomb was dropped, Tetmaia itself disappeared from the map. Able to shrug off the force of a bomb powerful enough to rewrite the map, and wielding the might to erase a country from the map. That's the sort of creatures dragons are.

「However, although dispatching the army is out of the question, we can hardly sit back and do nothing either. Send appropriate people from the Investigation Bureau. Have them team up with the existing search members to help find the culprit.」

「Would they actually be welcomed?」

「Worried about the investigators' pride? Feed that stuff to the dragons. Issue a directive that our people are free to operate independently if the other side doesn't intend to cooperate. This might not be limited to just that country. This isn't the time to be worrying about appearances.」

The Investigation Bureau responds to the President's orders.

「That's enough for dealing with the other country. We must tighten our defence here as well, right. Reinforce all the surveillance at all airports and harbours. Absolutely do not allow the abducted infant dragon to enter our country. It's not a problem even if the inspectors have to get a little rough. Check everything that is suspicious. Ah, better watch out for smuggling as well I guess?」

After the rapid succession of orders, the people in charge began to grimace. The country of Dazdoldia is a superstate that encompasses an entire continent. Naturally there are an enormous number of airports and harbours, and when private ones and illegal ones are included, it's no simple task to monitor all of them. However, if they don't and the abducted infant dragon was brought into the country, in the worst case it would mean that the dragons would target this country instead. That could not be allowed to happen. Precisely because he understood that, the President had to give the orders no matter how difficult they were to achieve.

「.....Also, spread this to the Sariera Society.」

The President was vague, but even so the order was clearly given.

「That will mean disclosing confidential information to a civilian charity though. Are you sure about that?」

「It's fine.」

In response for the request for confirmation, the President gave an immediate reply. The one asking understood as well. If the dragons actually did

rampage, the only one who could stop them was the Sariera Society. Or to be precise, only the Sariera Society's president.

The Sariera Society is a charitable organisation not attached to any country. Their range of activities is wide-ranging. Protection of plants and animals. Support for hospitals. Aid for the poor. On top of that, they even have experience mediating in wars. They are an organisation that undertakes every activity that is considered to be charitable. That is the Sariera Society.

There is a plausible seeming rumour regarding the Sariera Society. Namely, that the president of the Sariera Society is not human. None of the humans who knew the truth about that were in this conference room. However, they did know that it was true that the president of the Sariera Society could stop the dragons. Because on the occasion of the Tragedy of Tetmaia, the one who suppressed the raging dragons was precisely that person.

「I don't know how the Sariera Society will respond. But, there shouldn't be any downsides to informing them.」

The Sariera Society performed charitable activities. Furthermore, their actions were far purer than any other charity. Unselfish to the degree that people wonder if they're actually human, purely aiming to provide salvation every day. The number of humans saved by those activities were countless, and in addition their activities impressed countless wealthy individuals who then provided backing. Originally, the organisation called the Sariera Society was formed by people who had been deeply impressed by the actions of the president and wanted to support the president. The Sariera Society was not formed by the president - it was formed to support the president. So long as the president never commits a crime, the Sariera Society will never side with evil. And so, based on the President's knowledge of the Sariera Society, upon learning about the current incident, it was inconceivable that the president of the Sariera Society would ever misuse that information. At any rate, she was so pure and noble that she was even called a goddess by the public.

「Fearing the wrath of dragons, we cling to the kindness of the goddess. Seriously, we sure are powerless.」

In response to the President's grumbling, the conference ended without

anybody responding.

Translation notes:

“Dazdoldia” - almost certainly the location of the modern “Daztoldia” continent, given how they’re so similar.

“Sariera Society” - this presumably is where the country of Sariera got their name from. On a separate note, the “president” of this society is referred to as 会長 which is completely unrelated to the word for the president of a country - 大統領. I could have translated 会長 as “chairman” or “chairperson” as well but I don’t think that really fits here.

Past Arc ③

Gyuriedistodiez was still young for a dragon. For that reason, his indignation during the current incident was strong. Both against the humans who had committed the outrage of abducting an infant dragon, and against the upper echelon dragons who were seemingly acting timid against the humans by showing mercy.

These damn humans who would commit such atrocities - wouldn't it be better to simply destroy them along with the country?

Those were Gyuriedistodiez's unfiltered genuine thoughts. To dragons, life forms other than themselves were all nothing more than inferior beings. Since dragons were guaranteed to rise to the realm of the gods from the moment they were born, Gyuriedistodiez didn't care to call those frail creatures that would almost all die before becoming gods anything other than "inferior". The supreme race that controlled the world were dragons alone. It would be fine if they obediently served dragons, but it was appropriate to destroy a race that would commit deeds that effectively spat on dragons. In his own judgement, only going as far as destroying the country and not the entire race was considered merciful. That's what Gyuriedistodiez thought, but the order handed down by the upper echelon dragons was much more merciful, so much so that it could be considered lenient.

「Damn!」

In agitation he clicked his tongue. Gyuriedistodiez was currently transformed into a human. Despite being young, to Gyuriedistodiez who had already reached the realm of the gods, changing his shape was something trivial. Compared to his original form his human form was much smaller, making it easy to transform into. Having taken on human form, Gyuriedistodiez was currently walking through a district that humans had built. His objective was the search of the abducted infant. Take on human form, and take action while being careful not to cause trouble to the humans. Destructive actions were out of the question. Those were the orders handed down from the upper echelons.

Lenient. A far too lenient response. With the power at Gyuriedistodiez's disposal, even crushing a country was easy. He considered that it would likely be better to destroy a country as a warning, so that the humans would never consider taking unusual actions again.

Gyuriedistodiez had already located the whereabouts of the abducted infant. Gyuriedistodiez was a dragon whose greatest forte was in manipulating space itself, and using that power to determine the location of someone of his own race was simple. However, he was still unable to take action. That was because the intention of the upper echelon dragons, was that the humans must resolve this by themselves as much as possible. Rescuing the abducted infant would be simple enough. However, since it was the humans who had abducted the infant, it was better to make the humans take responsibility for that. Therefore, he had to let the humans rescue the abducted infant. That was the conclusion from the upper echelon dragons. In the unlikely case that the infant faced danger Gyuriedistodiez was there for insurance, and so long as the infant wasn't in danger then he couldn't take action. Gyuriedistodiez was disgruntled about that.

On top of that, the bad air in the human district was making Gyuriedistodiez's mood worse. The vehicles called cars emitted exhaust fumes, the large buildings confined the space, and the streets were packed with humans striding around as if they owned the place. That was all part of it, but the most aggravating aspect was that this place was claimed as a human district. It was becoming hard for him to suppress the desire to impulsively blow away everything. He couldn't understand why the upper echelons would leave such creatures to their own devices.

What Gyuriedistodiez felt, was nothing unusual for dragons. As a whole, dragons consider themselves to be supreme beings, and seriously believe that they should be in control of the world. Thus, for inferior creatures such as humans to not be under the dominion of dragons, and even maintaining self-reliance and self-governance, is not something considered to be interesting by many dragons deep inside. However, if there's one difference between Gyuriedistodiez and the upper echelons, it's whether or not they were aware of the fact. The fact that there is an existence that even dragons cannot simply

meddle with.

A young man bumps into Gyuriedistodiez's shoulder. A young man together with a young woman. The young man didn't even notice that he had bumped into Gyuriedistodiez, and continued to walk along with his lover while laughing.

Gyuriedistodiez's fury boiled over in an instant. An inferior creature had bumped into him and then disregarded him. There was no reason for him to forgive such humiliation. All the irritation that had piled up within Gyuriedistodiez, would be channeled into the deserved killing of the young man who had committed the disgrace. Just by striking his fist into the forehead, that frail human would be killed. An instant later would be the spectacle of the young man being entirely smashed to pieces. Or should have been.

「Warning. Physical interference towards primitive creatures cannot be permitted.」

Gyuriedistodiez's hand was gently held by another hand. That hand that only seemed to be lightly placed, had completely stopped Gyuriedistodiez's action. Even when he tried to pull it back, he couldn't move his body.

「What the!?!」

Given his trembling voice, even he himself did not understand the reason.

「Hostile action towards primitive creatures observed. Allowing such actions violate the aforementioned mission. Will proceed to elimination.」

In response to Gyuriedistodiez's meaningless question, the person who had caught his hand dispassionately informed him so, as if explaining some facts. Spoken with a gaze so lacking in emotion, that it was like an artificial eye. With a gaze as indifferent as if looking at garbage.

Gyuriedistodiez hadn't been aware. That in this world, there was an entity that was on more than equal terms with dragons. Gyuriedistodiez met that entity on this day. A member of the anti-god battle angel race, belonging to the seraph class of higher order angels, stray angel Sariel. The mass god-killing machine, referred to as the goddess.

Translation notes:

“Sariel” - clearly a reference to the angel Sariel ([more here](#)). In case it’s not clear, Sariel speaks like a robot - very impersonal and lacking in emotion or character.

Past Arc ④

Her mission - to protect primitive creatures. Sariel has been carrying out that mission since the distant past. Protecting creatures from natural disasters, in particular protecting them from gods coming from off-world, only ever thinking about the situation of the primitive creatures. She has saved many lives. However, for Sariel who is specialised for combat, there was also countless lives that she was unable to save. Each time that happened, Sariel pondered. What is the best option? Where did things go wrong? Simply carrying out her mission. All to accomplish that, since before mankind even developed civilisation, Sariel has continuously been pondering such things.

Dealing with gods invading from outside is simple enough. Sariel belongs to the seraph class of higher order angels. Her combat abilities are so high that average gods don't stand a chance against her. It makes no difference if they're dragons either. The reason why dragons don't rule this planet, is because of the existence of Sariel. In order to defeat Sariel, it would be completely impossible without the upper echelon dragons joining in. Even then there would be no certainty, and if they were careless even the upper echelon dragons could be defeated. The upper echelon dragons on this planet are aware of that. Gyuriedistodiez wasn't aware of that. That's why, he took action while being unaware of how terrifying she was.

He stretched out his unheld hand towards Sariel. That he moved to grab her rather than punch her, perhaps shows that a sense of reason still just barely remained in Gyuriedistodiez's brain, or perhaps that he instinctively sensed that he couldn't win and hesitated to completely antagonize her. Either way, the fact that he didn't try to punch her, resulted in Gyuriedistodiez escaping death.

Gyuriedistodiez's hand that made to try to grab her was brushed away. It was an action so casual that a "slap" sound effect could practically be heard, but for a god like Gyuriedistodiez to have his hand brushed away, wasn't something that was normally possible. In the first place, Gyuriedistodiez's grabbing hand easily surpassed the speed of sound, so considering that it was repelled with a

physical body, it means that the collision alone between both hands would cause terrible shock-waves. That was due to the laws of physics, but Sariel disregarded them. As she had used a barrier to forcibly shut in the explosion that would normally have caused damage to the area. Taking the destruction of the surrounding area into consideration, is a pointless action in the midst of battle. However, the fact that she actually did it, indicates the true gap in strength between Sariel and Gyuriedistodiez.

「Second warning. Physical interference towards primitive creatures cannot be permitted. Allowing such actions violate the aforementioned mission. Will proceed to elimination.」

As the words indicated, the words spoken just recently were repeated.

「There will be no third warning.」

However, the words that followed were completely merciless advice. It was a plain declaration that if he tried to do anything further then he would be eliminated without question. However, Gyuriedistodiez was not aware that he was being treated with considerable tolerance thus far. Based on the information she had gained of this incident, Sariel knew which side was at fault. While there was nothing praiseworthy about raising a hand to unrelated members of the public, she also knew that dragons saw humans not as individuals but as a race. For that reason, she held back from crushing him immediately. Normally, the instant any non-native species tried to take action against the primitive creatures of this planet, she would crush them without question. Comparing that to this occasion, issuing a warning not just once, but ignoring a little prank and issuing a second warning, shows a considerable degree of tolerance. If Sariel had come here without knowing anything instead, or if Gyuriedistodiez had tried to punch her rather than grab her instead, then his life would have ended right there. And then, his lucky breaks continued.

「Hm!？」

A grunt of surprise leaked out from Gyuriedistodiez mouth. However, that was not due to Sariel, and instead his gaze went through Sariel to a different location. To where the abducted infant dragon was. In Gyuriedistodiez's eyes, at the place where the infant dragon was being held, armed humans could be seen

breaking in. Those armed humans, were also identifiable as belonging to the regular army of this country. Gyuriedistodiez single-mindedly concentrated on their actions, checking whether any harm could come to the abducted infant dragon. That concern passed without being realised, and the attacking soldiers captured the group of kidnappers. The abducted infant dragon was safely taken into protection. Observing that through clairvoyance Gyuriedistodiez breathed a light sigh of relief that the infant was no longer in danger for now. Then, remembering that his hand was still being held, he became baffled as to what he should do for the first time since coming here.

Gyuriedistodiez realised that the still expressionless woman holding his hand, was the stray angel Sariel that he had heard about. He had heard about her. About the stray angel on this planet, and that precisely because of her existence the dragons could only take half-hearted actions. However, there are things that can't be understood without seeing her in person. With Gyuriedistodiez seeing her in person, he realised that his expectations of her were unimaginably naive.

Dragons uniquely have the ability to create a special boundary field. A field that invalidates all magecraft, something that could be said to be the natural enemy of gods that rely upon the foundation of the paranormal phenomenon known as magecraft. Naturally, Gyuriedistodiez was using that ability as well. However, that field, was currently being suppressed by force. It was being overwritten by the field that Sariel had projected. The field that dragons have can invalidate even the magecraft of gods. However, Sariel had turned that common sense upside down, and was suppressing Gyuriedistodiez's field with another field of such power that it couldn't be invalidated. A pure feat of strength, to an absolutely absurd degree.

The difference in strength was simply too great. Here and now, Gyuriedistodiez became aware that he himself had done something very risky. If he had ignored the second warning and had launched another attack then what? Without doubt the dragon known as Gyuriedistodiez would have come to an end there. By chance the rescue operation of the abducted infant dragon occurred with opportune timing, and without the country's army storming into the kidnapper's base he likely wouldn't have been distracted. However, if that

hadn't happened and with him having lost his cool at the time, what would the end result have been then? On imagining such a thing, this time Gyuriedistodiez became cool-headed.

「The subjugation seems to be completed. We should go.」

Still holding Gyuriedistodiez's hand, Sariel walked off towards the scene. Gyuriedistodiez followed, lead by Sariel's hand. In his dread, Gyuriedistodiez couldn't do anything except to follow in silence.

Afterwards, the abducted infant dragon was safely delivered into Gyuriedistodiez's hands, and as the one who reported the location of the criminals to the country, Sariel gave a firm refusal to the army commander who had wanted to give her hospitality as a reward. She simply left. The young dragon looking on that scene, would never have imagined in his wildest dreams that he would fall in love with her later on.

Translation notes:

“Will proceed to elimination” - I had previously translated this as “Proceeding to exclude”.

Oshiete D-Sensei! Lesson 2

D「Greetings. We are back with everyone's favourite segment.」

M「I'll do everything to pretend the previous disgrace never happened.」

D「E-v-e-r-y-o-n-e-'s f-a-v-o-u-r-i-t-e!」

M「There's no need to be so desperate... Well, let's get on with it already.」

D「E-v-e-r-y-o... [That's enough, okay?].」

D「Ahem. Starting from the beginning then, it is time for the second “oshiete D-sensei”. On this occasion we shall discuss the gods.」

M「Ahh, that's torn it I guess.」

D「At the time of the Past Arc, it was impossible to give an explanation about the gods. There was no other way, so there was no option except for D-sensei to make an appearance. Thus, this segment was revived.」

M「How meta.」

D「That being said, the explanation will not be especially detailed. The subject of the gods becomes a huge topic once you start to discuss it, so I shall only explain the parts relevant to the Past Arc.」

M「Specifically, that would be regarding the dragons and angels, right?」

D「Correct. As was touched upon in Past Arc ③, the dragons are a bunch of damn fools who believe in the supremacy of dragons.」

M「Do not use such bad language! You're not wrong though.」

D「Indeed, seriously, they really are a bunch of good for nothings. They are egotistical and haughty creatures who cannot accept not being the best. Nonetheless, since they are strong at least they are troublesome in the extreme.」

M「Since the one in charge of the exposition is doing nothing but complaining I shall give a detailed explanation. Dragons are born with the expectation of being able to reach the realm of gods sooner or later, so they could be called the elite from the moment they're born. The origins of them are also ancient, as they are said to be the second oldest gods, following the oldest gods known as the titans. They have both history, and power. As a result, they flaunt their successes and don't hesitate to declare that the dragon race are at the very peak, and in fact they rule over many planets.」

D「In short, they are cocky.」

M「Well, you're not wrong. However, they do in fact have enough power to justify that. Being gods they carry an enormous amount of energy within themselves for a start, and their bodies are far sturdier than any human's. In addition they have high intelligence.」

D「Due to their personalities that high intelligence is not readily apparent though. Being narrow-minded is not good. Gyurie-kun would surely also blush at how he acted in the past.」

M「Just how much do you hate dragons? Sheesh. Let's continue the discussion. The greatest trait that dragons have is their boundary field ability. Being able to completely invalidate the workings of magecraft, is the boundary field trait that dragons possess. In modern times the dragons and drakes that appear have the magic obstruction skill which is a deteriorated version of the ability that real dragons have.」

D「The dragons and drakes that exist within the System are imitations of real dragons after all. The only true dragon left on that planet is Gyurie-kun.」

M「There's no comparison between the boundary field of real dragons and the imitations. In particular, the individual recognised as the strongest dragon is even called the "The Unbreakable God", boasting a defence that invalidates almost all attacks. Such a cheat eh.」

D「.....Like you are one to talk?」

M「Oh my, what might you be referring to?」

D「Nope, nothing.」

M「Well, this is how the dragon species already boasts of possessing perfect strength. A species with such strength would intend to rule over worlds.」

D「STO-O-P! I shall explain from now on. Or rather, if I let you keep on with the explanations in my segment, it will totally become "oshiete Meido-sensei". I shall definitely block any further explanations.」

M「Erm, well, okay. Go ahead.」

D「As a species the dragons certainly have great power, but the reason why they do not currently rule over worlds is due opposing forces, as I am sure you are already aware. One of them is the angels.」

M「There are forces other than angels, but those will be left out.」

D「There are a lot of them after all. If we started talking about them all it would

never end. Anyway, with regards to the angel race, they are a bunch with a lot of mysteries about them. In the first place, it is said that they suddenly appeared after all. This was during the ancient times when the dragons had gotten full of themselves, and it is said that suddenly one day appeared beings who began to kill the gods. I had not yet been born then so I can only go by the rumours though.]

M「Those times were very chaotic, apparently. At any rate, during the period when there was the two great powers of the dragons and the titans, there was the sudden appearance of a third power.]

D「Moreover, when it came to gods they attacked indiscriminately. Naturally, it was chaotic. There are various opinions with regards to the true nature of angels, but the most prominent one is the theory that perhaps they are a defence mechanism belonging to the various worlds. According to this theory, the angels might be a race that was born from worlds that felt a sense of impending crisis due to the gods going rampaging around like drunkards.]

M「They not only suddenly appeared without any warning, they also only attacked gods after all. And, the aspect that supports this theory more than anything is that the angels evolve by killing gods.]

D「Indeed. All members of the angel race are capable of evolving by killing gods. If they defeat a strong god they get that much stronger, and if they defeat a smart god they get that much smarter, even adopting the appearance. The reason why many have a humanoid appearance is because they killed the god said to be the originator of the human race. Incidentally, this law also applies to the worlds as well. If a prominent god dies then the living beings on that world also evolve to become closer to that god. The reason why it is believed that the angels might have a strong connection to the worlds is because of the existence of this law. Then again, there is an enormous gulf between the rate of evolution of normal living creatures and angels though. An angel will radically evolve on killing a god after all.]

M「Ironically, as a result of evolving too much and gaining a sense of self, a certain fallen angel appeared who began doing whatever he felt like.]

D「Indeed. By nature angels are all similar to Sariel who just made her appearance within the story, lacking in human kindness and being like machines. Despite her being known as the Goddess with her head full of

flowers, I am sure it was unexpected for Sariel to be that type of character.]

M「Surely.」

D「In practice she is a woman who will absolutely accomplish her mission. Moreover, the worst part about her is that she is a stray angel.」

M「Regarding her being a “stray angel”, for some reason she has strayed from the main force of angels, yet is still faithfully continuing to accomplish her given mission. In this sense her being a stray angel is like a “bug”, and with her being the type to blindly devote herself to her mission without any flexibility she’s causing many troubles. Seriously, why did this individual called Sariel become a stray angel?」

D「Regarding that, while I am not certain whether it is related or not, but long ago there was a nuisance of a god rampaging around that area apparently.」

M「Then isn’t it due to that god? The angel Sariel is a powerful enough individual to meddle with dragons without hesitation it seems. Surely she wouldn’t become a stray angel without something unprecedented occurring.」

D「Indeed, something must have occurred. As unprecedented as the god rampaging around in those days killing random gods to improve her skill. Indeed.」

M「.....」

D「Of course, it is unknown if it was related. Indeed, completely unknown.」

M「U, undoubtedly it was unrelated. Surely it was. Let’s say it was okay.」

D「And we shall leave it at that.」

D「Well, let’s summarise things for a moment. The planet on which the main story is set was once the domain of angels. However, some sort, indeed, some sort of trouble occurred, and the angels apart from Sariel vanished, leaving Sariel alone to carry out her mission, and properly continued to protect the primitive creatures.」

M「Hey, please don’t emphasise the “some sort” part!」

D「Then the dragons secretly settled. Despite being scared of Sariel they waited for their chance to rule the planet. Sariel was indifferent to anything except her mission to protect the primitive creatures after all. So long as the primitive creatures were left alone they could stay there.」

M「It’s really touching to hear the effort they put in. I have nothing to say about how they arrived with the desire to rule the place though.」

D「They are dragons after all so it cannot be helped.」

M「That's dragons for you.」

D「But, what we have been talking about is what happened prior to the Past Arc. From here on will be Po-no-ji's secret manoeuvrings, Po-no-ji getting up to bad stuff, Po-no-ji being reckless and all sorts of other bad things.」

M「Isn't it generally Po-no-ji's fault?」

D「That is terribly correct. Then at the end of the world I shall make my descent! My glorious offer to save the world shall appear later in the Past Arc.」

M「What a terrible spoiler. Ah, no. You saving the world is a pack of lies.」

D「Evil Gods don't lie.」

M「Liar!」

D「We shall end this second installment of “oshiete D-sensei” here. Well then, until next time. Good bye!」

M「Good bye.」

Gyurigyuri: In the past, I was a rascal to the extent that I would actually say “You damn inferior creatures!”

Meido-san: In the past, I was a rascal to the extent of killing random gods to improve my skill.

D: Past and present a rascal.

Translation notes:

“The Unbreakable God” - literally “the hardest god” (as in toughness) but that sounds a bit odd.

“Nope, nothing” - the implication here is that D was referring to something cheat-like about Meido and that Meido was slightly threatening D in return so D dropped the subject.

“stray angel” - for reference, Gyuriedistodiez refers to himself as a “stray dragon” using the same word for stray in chapter 193, when he drinks with the then Arachne Kumoko.

“Po-no-ji” - an indirect way to refer to Potimas. See the chapter on Potimas for a longer explanation.

“Meido-san: In the past, I was a rascal to the extent of killing random gods to improve my skill” - it should be clear from this line and the other hints dropped

that the “rampaging god” who resulted in Sarel becoming a stray angel was almost certainly Meido-san.

Past Arc ⑤

Potimas was glued to the monitor, closely observing what was being shown on it. On a gigantic screen many graphical windows were open, showing various things. On one window was a video, on another window was a chart, on yet another window was a document. Potimas was reading those various pieces of information side by side.

All of those were data created by the criminal group behind the kidnapping of an infant dragon in a certain country. Video footage of when the infant dragon was kidnapped. Observation documents on the infant dragon after it was kidnapped. Also, body tissue data collected from the infant dragon. Potimas had in his hands all the data owned by the criminal group who had kidnapped the infant dragon.

Potimas had no connection with the criminal group. To be more precise, no direct connection. Potimas had a slender connection to the criminal group, via multiple people and organisations as intermediaries. However, the criminal group wasn't aware of that. Unbeknownst to the criminal group, Potimas was taking the fruits of their labours. In addition, to completely avoid dirtying his own hands, he even made use of others to steal the data. By using all these precautions stacked on top of each other, even the most capable investigator would not be able to trace the crimes back to Potimas. Even if by chance they were able to trace the crimes back to him, Potimas was manoeuvring to prevent himself from being arrested.

The investigation had in fact come to an end, but Potimas himself didn't have the slightest intention of being involved in such a dangerous crime. He especially did not want to take on the dangerous creatures known as dragons. Because Potimas did not want to die, he would avoid anything that would slightly increase the risks to his wellbeing. If he was ever to take such actions, then it would only be after Potimas had ensured his own personal safety. Thus, only after making meticulous plans to ensure his own personal safety, did Potimas trigger the incident in question.

The criminal group were sacrificial pawns in order for Potimas to collect

experimental data. Even the organisation behind those sacrificial pawns were themselves prepared as sacrificial pawns, and even the fact that Potimas was connected with that organisation wouldn't come out. This incident resulted in many people being arrested. However, none of them reached Potimas. They had been induced in such a way that it was a matter of course that they wouldn't.

If by some chance Potimas's machinations were able to be completely exposed, then people would surely have been amazed at the extraordinary meticulousness of it all. All of that was done to achieve one objective - immortality. The great efforts that Potimas went to in order to achieve his dearest wish. His crazy obsession resulted in many people being dragged into the incident.

As a consequence, the amount of data that Potimas had been able to get his hands on, was pathetically small. While making enemies of the paranormal creatures known as dragons, and getting many people involved, all that Potimas had obtained was a report less than 10 pages long, and a video recording less than an hour long. Given the effort involved, what he had gained was pathetically small.

However, rather than sulking about that, Potimas eagerly watched the video, and re-read the obtained data again and again. While doing so he spun multiple ideas through his head. Until he had rewatched the video perhaps more than a hundred times, he was glued to the monitor forgetting even to eat.

Finally he came to a conclusion. That dragons didn't work according to science, but the logic of magecraft. In the data on the composition of the dragon's scales, there was nothing but conventionally known materials. While the scales were closer to being mineral than something biological, even so there was nothing unfamiliar about them. Despite that, the results from the structural strength experiments showed numbers that exceeded the values expected by the material composition by an unthinkable amount. It was a phenomenon that was unthinkable based on scientific general knowledge. In the recording made when the infant dragon was captured, it spat fire out from its mouth, was seen flying around as if disregarding gravity, stopped bullets and so on in mid-air, so that was something anyone who saw it would understand. It was clearly

understood that the video recordings were not manipulated and that no trickery was involved. The video was proof, that paranormal phenomena could actually occur in practice. Nevertheless, in Potimas's judgement those paranormal phenomena still had laws. If not for that then the infant dragon wouldn't have become short of breath and been captured. While they were paranormal phenomena that were unthinkable based on science, they still had rules and laws, and were not capable of anything and everything.

Once that was understood the rest was simple. In short, while different to science, the phenomena were still grounded in precise rules. That being the case, even if they didn't know the rules, it would still be possible for humans to replicate them. If there were no rules and laws regarding them at all, and they were something as intangible as a real act of god then Potimas wouldn't have been able to do anything at all. However, since there were rules and laws involved, then they were simply natural phenomenon that humans didn't currently understand. They felt paranormal purely because they weren't understood. If they could be understood then there would be nothing paranormal about them, and would simply be laws.

In order to explain those rules, Potimas then immersed himself in researching magecraft. Having felt the limits of science, he worked to achieve eternal youth and longevity. Finally, he discovered it. The strange energy that could not be explained by science, MA Energy. When the findings of that discovery, and the additional investigations that Potimas would make further, were made public, it shook the world and caused great confusion.

Translation notes:

“graphical windows” - while the exact technology level during this time is unknown, based on the terms being used they should have advanced computers with a “windows” type user interface.

No specific note but the treatment of magic as a branch of science is not new - see some of the discussion on Clarke's three laws. In science fiction and fantasy, it's up to the author to decide whether or not to explain the magic - some prefer a sense of wonder (keep it mysterious) and some prefer to make it more understandable and have that understanding be part of the plot.

Past Arc ⑥

Author「Gyuriedistodiez! Your name is too long!」

Gyuriedistodiez「!?」

Author「Therefore, you'll be known as Gyurie in the narration from now on!」

Gyurie「!?」

Author「Actually, wouldn't shortening it more to G be better!? Since your colour is black.」

G「!!?」

After that incident, Gyurie started making extensive use of clairvoyance to study Sariel.

Dragons are supreme, all other races are just inferior creatures. That's how he had been taught, and that's what he had believed without any doubts. However, that common sense was completely overturned by one chance meeting with Sariel. A power that overwhelms any dragon on this planet. Having been shown a glimpse of that power, Gyurie had begun to doubt the words that dragons are supreme that he had believed until now.

Perhaps if Gyurie had met a dragon who possessed equal or greater power than Sariel, then possibly his thinking might not have been overturned. However, Gyurie was born and raised on this planet, and had not gone off this planet and into the universe. He had had no opportunity to meet with a superior dragon in the universe. Consequently, Gyurie's knowledge of the upper limits of what dragons could achieve was restricted to dragons from the same planet, and Sariel had easily surpassed that. For that reason he started to doubt.

Were dragons really supreme beings?

Normally, dragons would never harbour such doubts. Perhaps it was because Gyurie was still young and had flexible thinking, or otherwise perhaps it was because Gyurie was somewhat unusual. Either way, he harboured doubts.

However, while that may be true, it wasn't so simple for him to overturn what he had believed in until now. For that reason, Gyurie decided to make

observations of Sariel who had become the trigger for his doubts. If he was to observe Sariel, then he had the hopes and fears of being able to determine whether or not dragons really were supreme. At that point the doubts within Gyurie had already changed his convictions, but since admitting that was galling, by somehow discovering Sariel's faults he wanted to gain the peace of mind that "see, dragons are supreme after all". All while turning his back on the reality that doing so wouldn't change the fact that there was no dragon on this planet who could compete with Sariel in terms of combat ability.

And so, his observations of Sariel began. Fortunately for Gyurie he had plenty of time. The very existence of dragons are far removed from ordinary creatures. Not just in terms of their life span, but unlike normal creatures they can also subsist with minimal food and sleep. Because of that, the daily life of dragons is surprisingly quiet. It's not unusual for them to do nothing for days on end. During such free time when he had nothing else to do, he would simply observe Sariel instead. He could observe her all day long.

Once Gyurie started observing her, his heart was filled with nothing but bewilderment. That what Sariel was doing was far too small in scope.

For example, if an epidemic broke out in a particular region, she would accompany the doctors. Indeed, from a human point of view, on seeing her bravely looking after patients she would be compared to a saint. However, from a god's point of view, it would be simple to use magecraft to exterminate the virus that was the underlying cause of the disease. Sariel didn't do that. Leaving matters to the doctors, she would allow humans to resolve it by themselves.

As he continued his observations, he repeatedly saw this pattern where she would fail to do something even though she should have been able to. What he gradually began to feel, was irritation. Why are you using such roundabout methods? For the sake of efficiency there should be far better methods. Surely by displaying the power of a god she would be able to solve a great many problems, yet she didn't. Sariel's inefficient methods, looked hypocritical to Gyurie. If you really want to save people, then surely it would be better to use the power of god without concern for how it was perceived. Despite that, Sariel stubbornly refrained from using the power of god.

Because of that there was a life she failed to save. A child that Sariel was

nursing.

「Onee-chan, thank you.」

「Thanks are unnecessary. This is my mission.」

「See you tomorrow.」

「Yes, see you tomorrow.」

That was a casual exchange on leaving the hospital. That was the last conversation between Sariel and that child. When Sariel visited the hospital the next day, that child had passed away.

It should have been possible to save the child. So why didn't she? And in spite of not saving the child, why did she then look so sad? When she was thanked, what was that subtle smile for?

Back when he begun the observations, Gyurie had thought that Sariel was a machine-like existence without any human kindness. He had been taught that that's how angels were. However, he noticed that was wrong during his observations. Certainly Sariel appeared to be mechanically carrying out charitable work. However, there were flashes of what appeared to be emotions during casual moments.

Didn't she seem happy, when thanked by that child? Didn't she seem sad, when that child passed away? Despite that, as if those emotions had never existed, she then mechanically moved onto her next task.

As seen from a human point of view, Sariel's actions were surely the epitome of salvation. She was practically worshipped as a goddess, and thanked. In response to that she always gave the same reply.

「Thanks are unnecessary. This is my mission.」

From a human perspective she surely seemed humble. However, Gyurie saw it differently. He saw her as a hypocrite wracked with guilt.

She could do it, but didn't. Despite not doing so, failing to save people made her depressed. As Gyurie thought that it would be better to save them in the first place if she was going to get depressed about it, he got increasingly irritated. Then as if glossing over her depressed feelings, she mechanically moved on to her next task.

Did she really understand? Despite calling it her mission, she is taking action based on her emotions. Despite saying that her mission was the protection of the primitive creatures, she was biased towards saving humans. Every time Gyurie saw Sariel seemingly lacking in self-awareness, his irritation got increasingly larger. Gyurie himself had also not realised that he had forgotten his original objective.

Translation notes:

“Onee-chan, thank you” - although onee-chan is used to refer to an elder sister, it is also commonly used to refer to girls in their mid to late teens or women in their early 20s, particularly by children. So the closest equivalent would be something like “Miss, thank you”. While Sariel’s appearance has not been described, she clearly looks young based on this.

Past Arc ⑦

「Why are you taking such roundabout actions?」

In response to the man who suddenly appeared before her and also suddenly began to criticise her, Sariel simply ignored him and walked on past.

「Hey! Wait!」

Not only did he shout out something behind her, he continued to shout while chasing after her, but Sariel continued to ignore him. Of course, she knew about the shouting man, Gyurie. She was already aware that he had transformed into human shape, that his true form was a dragon, and that he was also monitoring her with clairvoyance. However, despite being monitored, so long as that didn't conflict with her mission then Sariel would take no action to eliminate him. All the same, if he not only monitored her but attempted to cause harm then it would be a different matter, but there was no real harm with him complaining like he was right now. Ah, no, there was.

「Please be quiet in the hospital.」

Sariel stopped, looked over her shoulder and cautioned the shouting Gyurie. Hospitals should be quiet. It's common sense. By blatantly breaking that he is causing real harm.

「I don't give a damn about that!」

However, it seems like he was the type of person who couldn't comprehend such common sense. The volume of his voice became even louder. Gyurie began shouting again, under the impression that if all he did was to stand in front of Sariel and speak to her then she would be inclined to listen to him. He was going on about how she should be able to heal them if she wanted to, asking her if she was really a god and so on.

Since his voice was far too loud, the doctors and nurses, and even the patients were looking at Gyurie and also Sariel who was ignoring him. They were in a small hospital in a developing nation. It was a hospital built with the support of Sariel, or to be precise by the financial support of the wealthy

members of the Sariera Society who support Sariel's work. Due to it being a small hospital, Gyurie's voice resounded throughout the entire hospital. Annoying in the extreme.

「I shall warn you one more time. This is a hospital. It's common sense to be quiet in a hospital.」

Interrupting Gyurie's never ending complaints, Sariel gave him a warning. However, it seemed that Sariel's attitude irritated Gyurie, and his already bad mood worsened to the extent that it was quite obvious.

「In addition, this is a hospital for surgery and internal medicine. This place does not deal with mental illnesses so I suggest you try a different hospital.」

With a serious expression, Sariel mocks him with biting humour. On hearing that the attendants with Sariel went "pfft". Perhaps not liking the attitude of those attendants, Gyurie changes the target of his anger from Sariel.

「You damn inferior creatures!」

「Ah, excuse me. Nevertheless, as seen from others, just who would be judged to be the inferior one, hmm?」

The one who shifted the target of Gyurie's anger yet again was a man accompanying Sariel. The man's name was Foddway, and with a gentle smile on his face he was treating Gyurie with seeming contempt. Considering human lifespan, Foddway was quite old, but he carried himself with poise. Based on his appearance in accompanying Sariel he looked like a capable butler, but in fact he held the top position in a huge company. Enthused with Sariel, he was head of the list of the wealthy donors who provided financial support.

「How rude! Do you want to die!?!」

「Oh my? Can't win verbally so now you'll resort to violence? Not being able to win verbally against those you berate as inferior, I guess you must be the kind of fool who has misunderstood just who is superior? Ahh. I guess you don't realise that because you are a fool. Pray excuse me. I unintentionally used myself as a basis for comparison. I failed to realise the comprehension of someone inferior to me. Sorry about that. Please forgive me.」

In actual age the dragon Gyurie was the elder, but he had no chance against a demonically sly old fox who lead a huge company. Once Foddway opened his

mouth once, he could keep a constant stream of abusive language going. He could even keep going without pause for a whole day, but he wouldn't do something so pointless.

「I shall listen to you outside. This is a hospital. As Sariel-sama said, this is not a place for unrelated people to cause uproar. Or could it be, that your intellect is so inferior that you are not even able to understand something so basic?」

「Ugh!」

At Foddway's words, Gyurie groaned. Rather belatedly he realised that the humans in the area were looking at him coldly. Well naturally. If someone raves on about gods, then like Sariel suggested, it can't be helped if they're thought to be insane. Even though paranormal beings like dragons existed, to the people on this planet, things like gods and the power of miracles were the stuff of fairy-tales. If a grown-up started talking about such things with a serious expression, it wouldn't even be unusual if people pointed to him saying "what a nutcase". But then, the first problem was that he was making a fuss inside a hospital.

Gyurie followed Foddway outside. He stubbornly keep looking over his shoulder back at Sariel many times, but Sariel didn't pay him any attention and walked off in order to accomplish her original purpose.

「Stalkers are extremely rare here, you know.」

「Huh?」

On leaving the hospital for the nearby road with lots of people, Foddway said that.

「I'm saying that even stalkers should keep things in moderation. Couldn't you hear me? It seems that these superior creatures that you're talking about have poor hearing. Based on my common sense that'd be quite strange, but the world is a large place so let's just leave it at that. Surely there is a civilization somewhere where those with poor hearing are venerated. It's beyond my understanding though.」

When someone carelessly gives a foolish response to Foddway, this is what happens. But even this is him going easy on his victim and below his normal standard.

「Don't slander me. My hearing isn't poor, and in the first place I'm not a stalker either.」

「Oh my? To not even be aware of it, I guess you must be a fool.」

「Say what?」

Gyurie glares balefully at Foddway. His mood is at rock bottom. However, if he lost his temper and moved to take action, then as Foddway said it'd show that since he can't win with words he's just a fool who resorts to violence. Since a supreme being from the dragon race like himself wouldn't do such a thing, he's been pinned down by the force of argument. Besides, if he took action here then Sariel would definitely come. If that happened then this time for sure Gyurie's life would be over.

「Sigh.」

Nevertheless, as if he wanted to shake Gyurie's already unstable powers of reason, Foddway deliberately breathed out a sigh as if to make fun of him.

「If you're going to claim that you yourself are supreme, then how about at least trying to achieve the common sense of the inferior and humbled human race eh, dragon-dono?」

Gyurie was about to open his mouth in fury, but before all that, Foddway's last words preempted that. Those same words also left Gyurie dumbfounded. Gyurie had thought that Foddway was dealing with him not realising that he was a dragon. He had thought that only because Foddway didn't know that he was able to take such a foolish attitude. However, that wasn't the case. Foddway knew that Gyurie was a dragon, and moreover he still made a fool of him. That difference was small, yet huge.

「You bastard, you've been making a fool out of me while knowing that?」

「You bet I will. So long as I have a reason to make a fool out of someone, then I will do so no matter who they are.」

On seeing this old man making that declaration as if stating something obvious, Gyurie stopped holding an inferior creature in contempt for the first time. Because he was completely unable to understand him.

「At any rate, I can't bear to talk with you as you are now. You should leave now. Then, try studying human society a little. That way you should be able to

somewhat understand why I've branded you a stalker and made a fool out of you. If you can't even manage that then I'll have no hope for you. I would prefer it if you never show yourself before Sarii-sama again.」

Unilaterally ending the conversation, Foddway turned back towards the hospital and walked off. Left by himself, Gyurie could only do as he was told and left dejectedly.

Translation notes:

“You damn inferior creatures!” - this is exactly what Gyurie says he used to say in the past in the “Oshiete D-sensei! Lesson 2” chapter.

Past Arc ⑧

Just when did it start? Just when did Sariel start giving priority to humans over other creatures? The trigger was quite trivial.

The mission that was assigned to Sariel was the protection of primitive creatures. Being a type of angel that is combat specialised, the meaning of Sariel being assigned such a mission was that she should, in short, protect primitive creatures from other gods. The act of interfering with other gods means that, in short, the mission that was assigned to Sariel was the expulsion of gods. Similarly to the other gods, Sariel was not asked to interfere with the primitive creatures.

That's why she simply watched over them at first. Sariel had watched over the world the whole time. However, starting from a certain point Sariel no longer simply watched over them, but began to lend a helping hand.

The trigger, really was quite trivial. It was simply, a child who she helped out with minor good intentions. She merely helped up a child who had fallen over, something that would be a stretch to be called something as great as a virtuous deed.

「Thank you!」

All that happened, was that she was thanked. Such a slight thing was where it all began.



A stalker, refers to the act of following around a specific person. Understandably, the act of monitoring a specific person is also covered by that. There are different responses depending upon the country, but in developed countries it was an act that was mostly treated as a crime.

A crime. A dragon such as himself, was a criminal. Only Gyurie knew just how much of a shock that was for him. However, it would be enough to say that the impact was large.

As asked to by Foddway, in the process of studying about human common sense, Gyurie also gained knowledge about stalkers. Thus he became depressed. To think that the actions he himself had so casually done, was actually regarded as a despicable act and a crime to humans. A dragon such as himself, would be pointed out by humans as a despicable stalker behind his back. What a disgrace!

At the same time, he felt a sense of crises due to the depth of his ignorance. He became anxious about the fact that perhaps the things he had been doing until now, might in fact be seen as something absurd by other people. Driven by that anxiety, Gyurie studied everything possible about human common sense and customs.

Dragons would not normally do such a thing. They would not be shaken by how humans saw them. It was obvious that humans would regard dragons as being divine. Since dragons were clearly supreme beings after all. It was also obvious that humans would regard dragons as being strange. Dragons, as supreme beings, would obviously be beyond the understanding of stunted beings like mere humans. Humans are fools because they are unable to understand dragons, and a dragon's actions cannot possibly be wrong. Such things are normal for dragons.

However, in contradiction to that, Gyurie's heart was disturbed by the words of humans, and he studied human culture. From that point on his fellow dragons began to regard him as strange. As a supreme being, what need is there for a dragon to study the life of inferior creatures? As a supreme being, why does a dragon need to fit in with inferior creatures? It's fine between dragons, but if anyone has to fit in it should be those inferior creatures who should match themselves to dragons. Despite that, Gyurie didn't believe that what he was doing was wrong.

Until Gyurie had met Sariel he had believed that dragons were indeed supreme beings and hadn't doubted that. On meeting Sariel a tear had formed in that way of thinking, and on being defeated in arguments with Foddway that tear became even bigger. Dragons were certainly mighty and great. However, were they really supreme beings in the end? Despite being inferior to Sariel in combat, and losing to Foddway in words? Perhaps there are races that are

superior to dragons that I'm simply not aware of?

To dragons such thoughts were heresy, but Gyurie was fully satisfied with that. There was no doubt that dragons were extremely advanced beings. However, while that might be true, he had decided that it was overly hasty to arbitrarily declare that other creatures were inferior. In which case, wouldn't it be better to learn from the humans who he had not taken the least bit notice of until now, having considered them inferior and contemptible? The more that question drove him to study humans the more his beliefs changed.

Despite the excellence of dragons, they didn't attempt to make progress. Since even if they don't attempt to consciously do so, they will naturally improve in strength and knowledge as time goes by. And after a certain amount of time goes by, their intelligence will also develop in its own way. Precisely because they have enough time to be called an eternity, they are a species that can evolve to their peak potential without even trying to rush. That's how dragons are.

In comparison, humans have no time to spare. From a dragon's point of view, an entire human's lifetime goes by in just an instant, so their lives burn out in such a instant. Their whole life is bustling with action, and they take the concept of living seriously, rejoicing in life. While dragons spend their time in idleness, humans are taking action to a shocking degree. Even if the end result is trivial from a dragon's point of view, humans live. They live life to the full.

It seems that humans call people who do nothing and spend their time in idleness, a NEET. I see, going by that theory then all dragons are NEETs. Realising that, Gyurie secretly smiled. No matter how big a difference in strength they can boast of, it's inevitable for them to be made fun of and treated as nothing more than NEETs and even stalkers.

While dragons are being NEETs, humans are living desperately. As a race, dragons are superior. That is the undoubted truth. However, while that may be true, Gyurie was no longer able to look down upon humans as inferior creatures. If dragons simply rest on their laurels using the strength of their race, some day humans might give them a wake-up call or otherwise cause them to feel a sense of crisis. Even if that is over-thinking things, there are many things that can be learned from how humans live.

To thank her for giving him the chance to realise this. To apologise for what he had done until now. And most of all, to verify the answer, Gyurie made up his mind to visit Sariel once again. To verify the answer for why Sariel won't use her powers as a god.

Translation notes:

In case it's not clear, in Japanese, "NEET" is often used more as a pejorative rather than a technical term. It's not uncommon for English words to be used in somewhat different ways in Japanese.

Past Arc ⑨

Sariel pondered. What should she do? However, the answer never came to her.

The more effort she puts into helping one person, the more likely someone else will be sacrificed. The more she tries to resolve one problem, the more new problems arise. It was an endless chain. No matter what she did there would always be some people she couldn't help. No matter how much she tried to help them, they would never be saved.

There was a person who fell ill and expelled from the village. It wasn't an infectious disease, but in those days medical treatment had not yet been developed, so there was nobody who understood that. Having been driven out from the village, Sariel lent a helping hand to save the sick person, who otherwise could do nothing except wait for death. She cured the disease, and sent the person back to the village restored to health.

The next day, that person was burnt at the stake by the other villagers.

The witch used a devil to cure the disease. No, not just that, the witch sold her soul to the devil, and came for revenge. Either way, since the witch has returned the disease might spread anyway, so better kill her.

Why? Why? Why, why, why, why, why, why, why, why?

People are afraid of things they don't understand. The person who fell ill and was driven from the village immediately came back healthy. It was something beyond human reasoning. Rather than rejoicing in the miracle, they became horrified instead. Before all that, they had driven out a sick person. Holding their own lives precious, they abandoned the sick person who needed aid. They dodged their feelings of guilt by saying that the one at fault was the sick person. That by selling her soul to the devil to be cured of the disease, there's no mistaking that she has returned for revenge after being cast out.

The sick person had spoken to Sariel.

「Thank you. Now I can live together with my family again.」

That family, had gathered up kindling for burning her at the stake of their own free will.

No matter how hard Sariel tried by using her power, the tragedies did not end. Instead, the more she used her power, the darker the tragedies would become.

They never end. They never end. Even when they seemed to end, they never end.

Poverty. Discrimination. War. Crime.

There are times when people do something bad. There was also never times when nobody did something bad. There was also times when everyone did something bad.

Equally, those were all tragedies that occurred precisely because they were human.

The existence of wealthy people, means that the poor also exist. People hope for equality, and anyone who deviates from the norm is hated, and discriminated against. Despite all that they aim higher, trying to achieve a superior position to the norm. And then, as a consequence of trying to achieve a superior position, they then compete with rivals.

The tragedy never ends. The reason being, is that humans are living creatures that cause tragedies. Hating tragedies, and while causing tragedies to occur, they still pile up more tragedies. It was as if they were envious of the sick person who was burnt at the stake, and went out of their way to stock up kindling.

They are irrational. While having a mind that hates tragedy, their actions promote tragedy. That contradiction is far too irrational for living creatures. Nevertheless, that's how humans are. That irrational and imperfect creature, is exactly what humans are. A creature that is rational and perfect, cannot be called human anymore. Even though they cannot, humans still work towards that goal. As long as humans are human, they'll never be able to reach that goal though. And also, the more people try to aim for that goal, the more new tragedies are created. The reason being, is that to aim for that goal means to aim higher, an action where only the person in question tries to deviate from

the norm, betraying those who love equality. And then humans would show no mercy to one who deviated from the norm. It has always been the case that those who are different become discriminated against. For humans to be able to aim higher, the only way is for them to slowly make progress in lock step with their surroundings. Thus, because that means they could only advance about as fast as a walking tortoise, humans don't make progress. Even as civilization progresses, their insides are never making progress.

Thus while aiming higher, they spend forever going round in circles in the same place. Round and round.



「Potimas Hyphenath is violating the providence of god! He should be purged at once!」

In response to that extreme statement, although the President of Dazdoldia managed to avoid showing it on his face, he felt a headache coming on. Because of this overly long lasting conference, his head really felt heavy. It was due to fatigue, but also due to the agenda.

In response to the extreme statement just now various voices of approval were raised, as well as voices of criticism. Even though it was a spacious conference room, the loud voices of the members talking to each other resounded painfully.

The agenda was regarding the publication of the scientific investigations by the researcher Potimas Hyphenath. Whether to approve of it or to denounce it. This conference had been opened in order for the country to consolidate opinion. However, going by the state of things within the conference room, everyone could see that the agenda had become confused.

Potimas had announced two new discoveries. The first was called MA Energy, the discovery of a strange energy, and the successful practical applications of it. Energy supply was a problem that all advanced countries should be concerned about. Oil and coal were not unlimited of course, and the rate of consumption was rising year by year. Even if it wouldn't happen soon, eventually they would become noticeably exhausted, so energy development for the next generation

was something necessary. Then, a solution suddenly appeared before their very eyes.

Apparently, MA Energy was an energy that would never run out, and could potentially be used anywhere. So long as you have the dedicated facilities for it, an infinite amount of energy could be extracted from anywhere.

In response to such a dream-like slogan, the President had in private immediately discounted it as absurd. Infinite energy doesn't exist. It's just a pipe dream. It's not like a dream, but literally a dream. It might seem to be infinite, but a limit will definitely exist.

Besides, the President read through Potimas's published essay that was at hand. Written in there was the method to extract MA Energy and the method to convert that into electrical energy, but there was no description of what MA Energy actually was. It was simply described as being an alternative energy that simply sprung forth infinitely. Such a suspicious form of energy cannot be used.

The President had already come up with a response to that privately. However, the reason for the conference being disordered to this extent, was due to the other announcement.

The other discovery that Potimas had announced. That was a method to evolve the human body using MA Energy. By utilising MA Energy, it was said to be possible to make humans evolve.

According to data recorded within the clinical experiment in the essay, the test subject's physical abilities were remarkably improved, speed of thought showed a slight increase, and most of all, the lifespan was extended by a factor of 3 beyond the theoretical value. If the results alone could be believed, it was tremendous. To prove that, Potimas had made the test subject put on a demonstration, rewriting the sports record books one after the other. That alone was enough to boost the essay's credibility, but a vast quantity of data was also included in order to substantiate it. The volume of data included to support the lifespan improvement was particularly vast, and though it was extended by approximately 3 times the theoretical value, it was stated by reasoning that taking preserving health into account the actual value was between 2.5 times and 2.75 times the theoretical value.

Normally, such things would be junked as the nonsense of a mad scientist. However, because it was from Potimas Hyphenath, it was a different story. Developing equipment for brain transplants, the production of human clones, the normalisation of cancer cells. These new announcements came from a genius who had already produced such numerous achievements. Moreover, there was the inclusion of the test subject. It would be dangerous to say that it was faked.

More than anything, it was not the sort of thing that people would want to deny. The extension of lifespan. The evolution of humans. There wasn't anything more wonderful than those.

For this reason, the conference had become disordered. The President had already come to a private conclusion. If MA Energy was disavowed, then the use of that for evolution would also have to be disavowed. However, with the confused atmosphere within the conference room, that was unlikely to be agreed upon.

The conference continued. A choice was to be made for humans, who were not progressing. Would they evolve, or not? If they evolved, would they actually progress?

Translation notes:

“Witch” - in the original, there is no specific reference to this word or the gender of the villager who Sariel healed. However, it's pretty much impossible to keep this distinction in the English translation so based on the image that “burning at the stake is for witches” and “selling your soul to the devil is what witches do”, I used this word and a female gender even though it's technically wrong.

Past Arc ⑩

Gyurie placed the piece he held in his hand on the game board without hesitation.

「Ugh.」

In response to Gyurie's move, the competitor seated opposite gave out a small groan. There was then a brief pause.

「I concede.」

Then, the competitor conceded without moving a piece.

「Good gracious. I had reasonable confidence in my ability, though being so completely overwhelmed is actually refreshing instead.」

Seemingly speaking those words out of true feelings rather than as a way to conceal his frustration, the competitor was smiling in delight despite having lost. Foddway, the competitor, reached his hands out over to board to return the pieces to the starting position.

「You still want to continue?」

In response to Foddway merrily trying to keep the competition going, Gyurie inquired with a slightly fed up tone. Although he had come to meet Sarii, he had been forced to keep playing the board game with the old man in front of him who had come out to meet instead.

「You have plenty of time to spare, so there's no harm in spending a bit of it with this old man with one foot in the grave.」

Certainly, being a dragon, Gyurie had plenty of time to spare. Even if he kept Foddway company enough to satisfy him, he wouldn't think of it as a waste of time. Dragons and humans have a fundamentally different sense of time in the first place. The entire lifetime of a human, is just a brief moment for a dragon. While humans see time as something finite, dragons see time as something infinite. Surely as the person himself had said, he could at least stick out with playing as the opponent of an old man with one foot in the grave. But then

again, despite him saying that he had one foot in the grave, Gyurie saw Foddway as someone who would stubbornly linger on though.

In resignation, Gyurie decided to continue being Foddway's opponent. The two of them were competing in a board game with ancient origins. It was similar to what is called chess or shogi on Earth. However, compared to those, it had a much wider variety of pieces and a larger board, making it more complicated. For that reason, it took a long time to play a game. Long enough that it could take five days to complete a professional match.

The battle between them, was now entering the 17th round. Naturally, such a number cannot be completed within a day. Gyurie had spent the last several days requesting a meeting with Sariel, and each time Foddway came to compete with him.

Foddway's goal was obvious. He was making sure that Gyurie couldn't meet with Sariel. Anyone would be able to realise that goal given how open he was about it. And Gyurie, despite knowing that, could only go along with the intentions of the old man in front of him. So for now he simply focused on doing what he could. If he couldn't show his sincerity, then he wouldn't be able to earn Foddway's trust.

If he was determined to meet Sariel then he would be able to meet with her. No matter how much Foddway attempted to obstruct him, he had no way to stop a dragon like Gyurie. However, doing that would be wrong. Gyurie had to get the approval of the old man in front of him. Not as a dragon, but from the point of view of a fellow person. If he wasn't able to persuade this old man on grounds of equal footing, then surely he did not have the right to see the same things that Sariel saw.

「Ugh.」

He was already on the way towards a dominant victory in the game though.

「Not going to take time to think?」

「Taking time to think is heresy. During their lifetime, humans rarely get the time to think. Which is exactly why humans are afraid of making mistakes.」

Now that he said it, he remembered that Foddway had not once taken the time to think over his next move.

「Still, humans do make mistakes. Mistakes will always happen eventually. We pile up such mistakes, establish rules to prevent new mistakes from occurring, reducing further mistakes even if just a bit. Human history is basically the history of our mistakes. And we have reached where we are today by learning our lessons from that history. Even so, our mistakes haven't stopped though.」

While he kept on speaking continuously, Foddway placed a piece. Immediately Gyurie placed his own piece, and again it was Foddway's turn. However, after a long pause, his hands stopped for a while.

「Thus I'm not piling up these defeats for no reason. Defeats and mistakes, turn into new lessons each time. To demonstrate that lesson, I'll make this move!」

Foddway made that mighty declaration, and placed a piece. In response to that, Gyurie swiftly placed his own pieces so as to block Foddway's move.

「.....While that certainly wasn't a mistake, it wasn't the best possible strategy either. This was a good example of what you were saying I guess.」

「It's not what you say, but how you say it you know.」

The 17th round had also gone badly for him, but Foddway was a man who always had a way with words. Anything from trivial idle talk, to deep implications that could disturb Gyurie, he chatted away while in the midst of playing the deep board game.

「Language is called humanity's greatest invention you know. Human history is basically how we've endlessly argued back and forth.」

「Hey, isn't that strange.」

In this way that it was hard to tell whether he was being serious or joking, he was able to confuse others quite often.

「There's nothing strange about it at all. Due to the existence of the absolute beings called dragons, we humans have come to not rely upon brute force. While brute force matters in the end, until things reach that stage a battle of wits is what matters. By endlessly arguing about various reasons, it can be possible to deceive your opponent. Since that's all we've ever been doing that's why I've gotten such a sharp tongue you see.」

「Don't blame your sharp tongue on history. Also, I'd rather you don't casually

blame us dragons either.」

Contrasting Gyurie's fed up expression, Foddway smiled happily.

「Darn it. I'm amazed at that mouth of yours.」

「I don't intend to lose in this at least.」

Easily turning aside those sarcastic words, Foddway placed a piece with a proud expression instead. Gyurie soon placed his own piece, and that proud expression retracted.

「I don't feel like I can lose in this game, but I don't feel like I can beat you with words either.」

「Of course. The rate at which humans and dragons think at must be different after all. Most likely, no matter how many times I challenge you, it'll be impossible for me to beat you. It sure is strange though. Although both involve using one's head, while I don't have any chance of winning in this game, I don't feel like I'll lose in a verbal argument. While dragons are superior in straightforward calculations, maybe humans can win in sneakiness?」

While Foddway glared at the game board, he still seemed somewhat happy.

「There is no doubting how great dragons are. However, just because dragons are so great, it doesn't necessarily mean that there's nothing that they are inferior at when compared to other creatures. Dragons don't have a sneakiness like humans. Because they are strong enough without it. Even without bothering to use cowardly tactics like humans would, and simply by fighting fair and square they can still come off victorious against most opponents. Because of that, they don't need sneakiness. However, that's exactly why dragons are careless. They can be tripped up by the cowardly humans who they look down on as inferior. Indeed, just like a certain dragon right before me, who due to my cajolery came of his own free will to struggle against a human on equal footing eh.」

Foddway chatted away looking particularly happy. Despite having won on the board, Gyurie felt a sense of defeat due to Foddway's words. As if he was completely dancing to the tune of the old man in front of him, who was worthless and frail from a dragon's point of view. And that was entirely correct, when considered objectively. Although he was a dragon, he was easily being

manipulated by the inferior creature known as a human.

「Humans are cowards. And are more foolish than dragons can imagine. Despite the history of mistakes that we have piled up, we still make mistakes despite learning from our history. We make mistakes, yet more mistakes, and still more mistakes. Not only that, but every time we make a mistake at being nasty we become more devious, so the next time we make a mistake the damage becomes even larger. Even though we should be learning our lessons in order to reduce the damage. It sure is strange.」

Despite being twisted around in the palm of Foddway's hand, even so Gyurie still thought that he should face him from a human point of view, because it was a type of test. A trial of passage, in order to meet Sariel.

「While being a dragon, you've studied the human point of view. It will probably be hard to say that you truly understand humans even so. As I said just now, the creatures known as humans are far more foolish than dragons imagine. Sariel-sama has been facing that foolishness all this time.」

Foddway moved a piece. When Gyurie saw that Foddway didn't seem about to take his hand from the piece, he moved his own piece.

「I concede.」

Foddway accepted his own defeat with a sunny expression.

「Gods and people. If you can have both perspectives, you might be able to bring change to Sariel-sama. It's already too late for a simple human to do that. But saying that, a simple god doesn't work either. What's needed is an existence that is a god yet understands people.」

That was, the greatest advice that the defeated was able to offer the victor. And a request.

「Please, look after Sariel-sama.」

Gyurie did not respond in either affirmation or negation to the old man's sincere request.

Translation notes:

“Shogi” - sometimes called Japanese chess.

Past Arc ⑪

Foddway's life was one of kicking down others. The weak were there for exploitation, the strong were there to be deposed. That's how he had lived. Without resorting to crime and fraud of course, he made his wealth without any legal issues. That wealth was sucked from the weak, and swiped from the strong. He then moved on to making another pile of wealth. Foddway himself had no particular desire for money. That's simply how he was since birth, that making money was his job, and was his life. Like he was simply a cog on the wheel of the economy. The human called Foddway, was a device for spreading money around.

Compared to Foddway, Sariel was considered to be the exact opposite. Bringing salvation to the weak, and also lending a hand to those who were once strong and now cast down. With Foddway finding no appeal in leading a life where he simply piled up more wealth day after day, he grew interested in someone who was completely the opposite to himself. He wondered just what kind of saint she might be. Foddway donated part of his excessive wealth to the Sariera Society. He succeeded in using that connection to gain an audience with Sariel.

The person who he met there, was more of a device than himself.

Without emotion, she simply and dispassionately accomplished the mission given to her. She was not anything like the sort of saint that he had imagined. The impression that Foddway had of Sariel, was that she was a machine. Lacking a purpose of her own, a machine that simply executed the programme that had been inputted into her previously. Perhaps it would be more accurate to say that she was a machine that was functioning normally despite bugs occurring?

What Foddway felt for Sariel on seeing her, was pity. What he felt on seeing her dispassionately carry out her mission without understanding the ideals behind her own actions, was an indescribable pity. However, despite that, it didn't mean that there was anything he could do. Whether or not Foddway felt

pity, Sariel would continue to be an unchanging cog in the wheel of the world. Being someone who was nothing but another cog himself, Foddway couldn't do anything. Even so, he wanted to do something somehow.

For that man who had continued to be a cog until now, it was the moment when he decided for the first time ever that he would willingly go against the world.

From that day, Foddway began to follow Sariel. Although society found it amusing how such a heinous money-grabber had been purified by the power of the Goddess, he wasn't a man who cared about such things. Serving by Sariel's side as much as possible, he tried to learn what he could about her. To understand her, and to search for a means to liberate her.

However, it wasn't enough. Foddway didn't have enough at all. To understand her awareness, her emotions, her knowledge, her commonalities, what he needed the most was time. As a human, Foddway was completely lacking in time to understand a god.

By himself, he would not be able to understand enough about Sariel to liberate her.

Having realised that, Foddway made plans to allow someone to take over after him. Someone who could understand a god, and could stay beside Sariel for a long time. Such a person was needed.

Then before Foddway's own eyes appeared a dragon who laid his anger bare. It had to be him - that was Foddway's instinct. A god who could easily express emotions, such as anger. The meaning of having emotions, is that his thoughts would be similar to humans. Yet he was a god. There wasn't anyone else who met the requirements so closely.

Then Foddway deliberately showered that dragon Gyurie with caustic remarks, to test him. To determine whether this man was someone worthy of entrusting Sariel to. For a human to test a god, is an extremely brazen act. He wouldn't be able to complain if he was killed as a price for that. It would simply mean that his own perception was wrong. That's all. Thus, he prepared himself for the worst. The end result, was that Gyurie compromised with Foddway more than he could have imagined.

Foddway now had hope. That one day Gyurie would be able to liberate Sariel from the chain that was her mission. It would surely not be straightforward, but it would be enough for Sariel's heart to be gently released over the months and years. Foddway believed that Sariel had already more than fulfilled her mission as a cog after all.

If one perused history, a person similar to Sariel could be seen appearing and disappearing. The results of which were almost always disastrous. Try all she might to do good, but the results turned out for the worst. It was like she was being dragged into a bottomless pool of malice. Foddway felt that was due to the very ugliness of humanity.

Even still, in the name of Sariel's mission, she continued to provide her services to the world without stop. All while she was covered in emotional scars. Without even noticing that she was scarred. Seeing her continue to simply fulfill her mission, was just too pitiful.

It should be fine for her to rest already. He thought that, but Foddway had no means of stopping Sariel. Whether by his words or by his actions, Foddway was unable to touch Sariel's heart. Foddway did not have enough time in order to reach Sariel's heart.

Faintly existing within Sariel was something that could be called her heart. She was not a perfect machine without any heart at all. That was why she was scarred. That was why she could be saved. However, seen from a human perspective, her heart was awfully small. Any flickers of emotion were microscopic, almost as if they didn't exist. Foddway wasn't able to appeal to those flickers of emotion. He wasn't able to bring out any waverings in her emotions that would just let her abandon her mission. Because of that, he was entrusting her to another.

He didn't particularly need to make her abandon her mission. However, he didn't want Sariel to be scarred any further. Sariel had few waverings in her emotions, but even so she had accumulated many scars over the years. So long as those scars could be healed, then anything was fine.

「I shall leave the rest to you youngsters. Though saying that, I'm by far the youngest actually.」

Foddway had brought Gyurie to Sariel's side. He had the feeling of being the member of a matchmaking service. He prayed to the gods that he didn't believe in, that the two of them would find happiness.

That wish, was trampled down by the malice of humanity. That endlessly bottomless malice.

Past Arc ⑫

「Our country hereby declares that we shall withdraw from the International Energy Organisation.」

At this international summit that a large number of countries were participating in, such declarations had already been issued too many times to count. The International Energy Organisation is an international organisation that deals with various energy resources such as oil and coal, and until now had centered around the countries that produced those resources. Its role was to facilitate the undisturbed exchange of energy resources, establishing rules by which negotiations between producer countries and consumer countries could be smoothed.

However, since the start of the summit there had been a proliferation of countries withdrawing from the International Energy Organisation. That was despite the fact that by withdrawing from the International Energy Organisation, that was in effect a declaration that they didn't need resources such as oil and coal.

Since the announcement of Potimas Hyphenath's MA Energy theory, the number of countries making this declaration had multiplied. Most of them were small and medium sized countries, those countries being under the burden of particularly strong energy measures, but amongst them were also large countries that weren't suffering from poverty. The countries that had issued the declaration had all similarly solved their energy problems by using MA Energy, meaning that they no longer needed resources such as oil and coal.

At first there had been many voices that had doubted the very existence of MA Energy, but by now it was confirmed that simply by following the method outlined in the thesis, it really was possible to produce energy from nowhere. Also, that was with no side-effects on the environment. Unlike existing methods, there was no pollution of the atmosphere from burning oil or coal, nor was there any radioactivity, and large-scale power generation facilities were unnecessary as well. So long as you have the equipment it was highly practical for anybody to be able to produce energy. In addition, small scale versions of

the equipment were small enough that they could even be carried. Even large scale versions were able to be transported on large trucks. Every household could have one.

The equipment was so simple, that it was easy to obtain energy that had until now required considerable amounts of money. Developing countries scrambled to make use of it.

The President of the country of Dazdoldia frowned while looking at the representative of the country who had made that declaration. He had predicted that such things would occur. However, even so he stubbornly refused to allow MA Energy to be used within his own country. Because of that his approval ratings had fallen sharply, but he had no intention of changing his opinion.

The dream-like energy that could be produced from nothing. Such a thing cannot exist. Since that energy actually exists, then it must have been taken from somewhere else. That “somewhere else” is a problem, and whether that energy really is harmless is another problem. After all, it was an unknown energy. Who knows what kind of effects it could have on the human body. It was also unclear if the method for the evolution of the human body that was announced at the same time was truly safe. The President believed that he had the duty to validate such things. So long as those things could not be validated, he had no intention of lifting the ban within his country, no matter how convenient it was for people to use.

However, that only applied to his own country of course. He wasn't able to stop foreign countries from endorsing the new methods. While he could exert influence on them, ultimately it was up to the politicians of the foreign nations to decide. The President had repeatedly warned about the possible dangers, but as to whether or not his warnings were heeded to was revealed by the current situation. Even if something might be dangerous, people don't feel a sense of danger unless they encounter that danger themselves. Rather than being scared of a danger that can't be seen, they would make use of the convenience right before them. All the more so because that convenience was significant enough to completely change the entire world.

Of course, not all countries jumped at the chance. Countries that produced oil and coal lost their greatest source of foreign currency, and vigorously appealed

against the use of MA Energy. There were also quite a lot of advanced countries who kept calm and took a wait-and-see approach.

Nevertheless, the global trend was heading in one direction. That was because the risks of MA Energy were unproven. No matter how much was used it never ran out, and it also came from nothing. And yet, no flaws had been detected for the time being. It truly was a dream-like energy. The countries who first made use of MA Energy developed rapidly. There weren't many countries who could endure observing such developments without doing anything.

And thus the trend in public opinion was in favour of MA Energy. There was also a method to evolve the human body with MA Energy. All human abilities could be improved, and above all, there were many people who desired to lengthen their lifespan. However, the medical procedure to achieve that, required the use of MA Energy. Unless the country approved the use of MA Energy, that medical procedure wasn't available. That being the case, it was inevitable that many members of the public desired for the bans to be lifted. This trend was particularly obvious within advanced countries.

Developing countries pinned their hopes on using MA Energy for development, and advanced countries were captivated by the potential evolution of the human body. There was no longer any method to stop this trend. Even the President did not think that he would be able to stop the usage within the country of Dazdoldia forever. Although he had some time yet before his term in office ran out, even that wasn't certain. It was possible that he could be dismissed from office.

The President gave a sigh of grief. Did they actually understand? These two theses were published by Potimas Hyphenath. By that criminal who was wanted internationally for the repeated use of cruel experiments on living people.

Then there was the other reason. One that gave the President particular cause for concern. That was, the opposition to MA Energy from two particular powers.

The first was from the dragons. Unless there was human interference, it was rare for the dragons themselves to make contact and proactively make a declaration. They said, don't get involved with MA Energy. Those dragons did!

At that moment, the President could only have a bad premonition.

The second was from the Sariera Society. The president, Sariel, issued an opinion in opposition to MA Energy.

This was a warning from all the living creatures who were within the bounds of common sense of humans. The President considered that ignoring that would be unwise. However, not even that stopped the global trend. It couldn't be stopped.

Later on, the President would come to deeply regret that he hadn't resorted to the extreme choice of using military force to stop it. However, time could not be rolled back.

Past Arc ⑬

The incident that was the trigger for Potimas Hyphenath becoming an internationally wanted criminal, was something that could have easily become a horrible tragedy. The incident itself was significant enough that it became a hot topic in the news throughout the world at the time. The world learned just how dreadful Potimas Hyphenath was. However, the information that was relayed in the news was only the tip of the iceberg. For those who knew the truth, they were in fact relieved that it was contained with only that amount of damage and were glad that it wasn't more. That's just how over-abundantly evil Potimas was. No matter how cunning and careful Potimas was, "they" became just too much for him to be able to conceal and burst out into the open. That was the truth behind that incident. The incident where the number of victims totalled 376 people.

「Human trafficking huh. How flagrantly anachronistic.」

On looking at the documents he was handed, Foddway sighed. Human trafficking, in other words the slave trade, was something that still couldn't be eradicated completely despite being a relic of the past. The Sariera Society also put effort into exposing organisations that smuggled slaves. The objective was rescuing the people who had been illegally sold as slaves.

However, Foddway himself had no intention of condemning human trafficking in general as being inherently evil. That was because there were times when human trafficking was necessary for stimulating the economy. Poverty stricken parents who sell their children would also be able to recover their livelihoods, and it was not necessarily always the case that the children would suffer. In a somewhat overstated interpretation, human trafficking could be seen as a service dealing in manual labour. If both those being sold and those doing the selling are happy, then it makes for a practical business. That being said, such decent slave traders wouldn't be called slave traders in the first place. Under a different name, it was something occurring throughout the world.

The human trafficking that Foddway considered to be evil was the type that

was brought to mind by the general public on hearing the term, in other words, the criminal type. Selling off abducted children. Using sold people to commit crimes. The type that should be exposed and judged. In the documents that Foddway was staring at, were recordings of black-market dealings so despicable that there was no room for defence.

「Well then? The originators and the dealers have been secured, right?」
「Indeed. They have been crushed with the cooperation of the police forces in the region.」

The one who answered Foddway's question, was a man wearing a suit, but such a thing felt unsuitable for such a brawny person. He was a director of a security company that Foddway ran personally. Or rather, that was just a fancy way of saying that he was the captain of a unit specialised in actual combat. As Foddway was a bigwig in the financial world, there was times when it was necessary to do shady things. Things that couldn't be revealed, such as resorting to violence. That was also the case on this occasion, where an illegal human trafficking organization was exposed, but not in an admirable way, but instead with the bloody methods of suppression by brute force. The proper way was to gather evidence, and judge them according to the law, but Foddway knew that they would have gotten away in such circumstances. Thus the strong measures. Which were illegal of course.

「It seems that you had a hard time.」

Foddway murmured that while looking at the captain's neck. A bandage was wrapped around it. Foddway had strong confidence in the captain's skills. On account of him making a living in a shady business, Foddway had as much trust in him as his normal personal bodyguards, or even more. That's precisely why he was able to report directly to Foddway like this. For something to have injured this captain, Foddway interpreted it as meaning that there was considerable resistance.

「Oh, not really. There were no problems with actually suppressing them. I got this wound in a bit of trouble afterwards.」

However, the captain casually denied Foddway's words.

「This is a bite mark from one of the people we rescued. Perhaps due to being

drugged, they were in a state of confusion. It was really pitiful.」

Against the assailant who had injured him, the captain was sympathetic. Surely due to how pitifully the person had been treated.

「It was that bad?」

「Indeed. It is likely that they were being administered illegal drugs. From what I could see, it seems that they had completely lost their sanity. Every last one of them.」

「My goodness.」

The state of affairs at the scene must have been gruesome indeed, for this captain who worked in a shady business to show disgust. That shows just how badly victims of human trafficking can be treated.

「You're looking pale. Are you okay?」

「Excuse me. I am just feeling a bit unwell. I can continue with my report.」

The captain was looking ill. Foddway interpreted that as him feeling unwell due to having recalled some unpleasant memories. However, while the captain continued his report, his complexion became visibly worse. Having reached this stage, Foddway realised that the captain had genuinely fallen ill.

「You look terrible. Let's continue the report another day. Sit down for a while.」

「I'm... so...rry...」

Unable to even articulate properly, the captain sunk his large body into a sofa that furnished the room. Seeing him like that, Foddway made a telephone call to arrange for a doctor.

That was what saved Foddway from death.

There was a piercing scream. The scene witnessed by the people who had come running, was that of the collapsed Foddway, and the captain who had bitten him in the neck.

Translation notes:

In case it's not clear, the opening paragraph is more like a summary after the incident with the rest describing part of the incident itself.

Past Arc ⑭

When Foddway opened his eyes, he was looking up at a ceiling he didn't recognise. The darkened lighting equipment in the ceiling was not one that he was familiar with. Although he felt languid and had a craving in his throat, the more time passed the more he regained his sense of awareness. Together with that, he began to remember as well. The suffering captain, who was unwell. That captain, who had suddenly attacked him. After being struck with intense pain, his memories were cut off there.

Foddway wasn't able to understand just what the heck had happened. The captain was someone who even Foddway trusted. For such a man to betray Foddway in such a sloppy fashion, was rather unbelievable.

Somehow, Foddway was able to calm down his still chaotic thoughts, but after understanding what had happened to him he became shaken once again. His body was lying down on a bed. That much was fine. However, Foddway's body was strapped down by thick belts. A lot of them as well.

「What the hell?」

Foddway was so surprised that he couldn't help speaking out unconsciously. Foddway was generally acknowledged to be a bigwig in the financial world. A key figure in other words, and the sort of person where it would be absolutely inconceivable for them to be restrained like this. Just what kind of situation would it have to be for someone like him to be restrained in such a manner? The first word that came to Foddway's mind was "kidnapping".

However, as soon as that word came to Foddway, he dismissed it. Even if the Captain had betrayed Foddway and kidnapped him, the situation was still too weird. Turning his head around, the only part of Foddway that could move freely, he checked his environment. What he saw, was medical equipment stationed around his bed. From them was an intravenous drip tube connected to Foddway's arm. Seeing that, he guessed that it was a hospital or similar. That would be too weird for a kidnapping.

However, even on realising that, the existence of the restraints didn't

disappear. He would have to ask someone about that at least. Having decided that, Foddway yelled towards a door.

「Hey! Is anyone there!?!」

Upon yelling he became more aware of the craving in his throat. After having reached a ripe old age, Foddway never felt such cravings in his throat anymore. Feeling such an intense craving in his throat after all this time, he fell into having a coughing fit. Perhaps on hearing the yell, the sound of some hurried footsteps came closer, and the door was vigorously opened. Dazzled by the light shining in from the corridor, Foddway squinted his eyes. At the same time, despite the room having been pitch dark, he only just realised that he had been able to see awfully clearly. Considering the craving in his throat, and considering his eyes being exceedingly used to the dark, Foddway guessed that he must have been unconscious for a considerable amount of time.

「Are you, awake?」

Then, on turning his attention to the person standing in the corridor, he was bewildered to see a different sort of person to his expectations. Foddway had expected doctors or nurses to rush in, but this person was dressed as a police officer.

「A police officer?」

The question flew out from his mouth. On hearing his voice the police officer was shocked. On seeing that over-reaction, Foddway's irritation welled up. Finding himself restrained on waking up, he wanted to voice his complaints at the unreasonable treatment, so his manner of speaking became forceful.

「Just what is the meaning of this? Surely you are aware just who you are treating like this?」

In response to Foddway's words, the police officer flinched noticeably. Presuming that this person was aware of just who he was, Foddway made a natural demand.

「Hurry up and release me.」

However, in response to his request to undo the restraints, the police officer did not comply.

「I, I'll call someone!」

Shouting that, the police officer ran off before Foddway could respond.

「How many fingers can you see?」

Just how much time had passed since the police officer had ran off? Foddway didn't have an accurate grasp of the time since there was no clock in the room, but with his body still being restrained, it was undeniable that he had had to wait a painful amount of time without being able to do anything. That's just how much time passed. Then, when someone finally appeared, it wasn't that police officer, but instead seven people crowding the room. One of them, who appeared to be a doctor, was giving Foddway a medical examination. While he was still restrained.

「Three.」

Despite being rather fed up, he responded to the fingers the doctor was holding up. At first, Foddway had demanded to be released from the restraints and be given an explanation of the situation, but the only answer he got was a somewhat vague “depending upon a safety evaluation the restraints can be released”. Foddway resented being treated as if he was some kind of dangerous person. However, the people surrounding Foddway had serious expressions including the doctor, bringing about a solemn atmosphere. Deciding that it would be wise to comply for now, Foddway swallowed his complaints, and obediently took the doctor's examination.

「Excuse me. Then, could you open your mouth please?」

「Sure.」

Foddway opened his mouth as asked. The doctor came closer to peer into Foddway's mouth, but he had a strange sense that something was off. Normally, when a doctor would look into someone's mouth, it would be to judge the state of the throat, right? However, what the doctor was looking at currently was something much closer, as if examining the teeth. On top of that, it wasn't just the doctor who peered into his mouth. The other six also stared at Foddway's mouth.

「Surely that's enough?」

Feeling uneasy, Foddway closed his mouth.

「Ah, sure.」

The doctor responded evasively.

「So? Do you understand anything?」

Foddway asked that without concealing his frustration. The medical examination was simple enough. Rather than confirming his health, it seemed more like that they were checking his state of awareness. Although having only recently woken up, from the point of view of Foddway who was fully awake, it felt like their tests were making light of him.

「Mr Foddway, your reasoning ability is normal.」

「That much should be obvious.」

Foddway impatiently spat that out in annoyance.

「It is not obvious.」

However, a dissenting voice was heard in response to Foddway's remark. Amongst the people who had gathered along with the doctor, it was from a man who appeared to have the highest standing amongst them.

「You are the solitary example of someone regaining their awareness, or rather, their normal awareness. Amongst those infected by a vampire, you are the only one to stay sane.」

The man declared that gravely.

「Huh?」

Foddway couldn't help making an atypically stupid sounding response.

Past Arc ⑮

The illegal research institute that had bought the slaves, was one that belonged to Potimas. And the fate that had awaited the purchased slaves, was to be used in human experiments. When the institute was exposed, the former slaves who were taken into care, were the victims of human experiments. Of vampire experiments.

Vampires. They were considered to be fictional creatures spoken of in fairy-tales, but they actually existed. What vampires were in practice, were rogue forms of normal creatures due to a special form of magecraft. Then, the creatures who became vampires, fed on the blood of other creatures, and the creatures who had their blood sucked became vampires themselves. They were strange creatures with an ecology not seen anywhere else, who altered their own species for food. The reason why such creatures were considered to be a fictional existence, is solely because the dragons hated vampires, and took action to exterminate them. Sariel as well considered vampires to be a non-native species, even if their original forms were that of native species, so she kept a close eye on the dragons' actions to exterminate them. Then, with nothing except vague legends remaining, that led to vampires being thought of as fictional creatures.

They were then revived by Potimas who had studied their legends. Vampires have all sorts of characteristics, but what got Potimas's attention was them having eternal youth. He considered the possibility of becoming a vampire himself, allowing him to gain the eternal youth part of immortality. However, he was not a daring enough person that he would suddenly apply such a procedure to himself. Using slaves, he made repeated experiments, attempting to verify the safety of the procedure. In the end, Potimas did not apply vampire transformation to himself. It was just too dangerous.

The slaves who went through the vampire transformation completely lost their own will, changing into monsters that simply existed to attack whatever creatures they saw and slurp their blood. And with the added bonus that the creatures that were attacked also become vampires themselves. That was a far

cry from the immortality that Potimas was seeking. Then, at a time during which Potimas was continuing the experiments to try to find a way that would allow the will to remain, the institute was exposed. He noticed that he was about to be exposed just in time, and fled. Following that, the slaves who had been used for experiments and the experimental documents were recovered. While taking the victims into care, several people got bitten.

Then, the people who had been bitten by the vampire slaves transformed into vampires themselves after a period of time. Having lost their own will, they attacked whatever creatures they saw. The new victims had their blood sucked, become vampires themselves, creating yet another wave of attackers. The vampires increased in numbers exponentially. It was a major incident that could easily have plunged the world into chaos.

However, it was stopped at the verge of that. Which was due to Foddway's collapse. To be more precise, it was due to the two people who realised the situation from Foddway's collapse - Sariel and Gyurie.

Noticing that Foddway had collapsed, the two of them had already planned to visit him. There, they sensed that Foddway had been transformed into a vampire. From there they took rapid action. Starting from the vampire who had bitten Foddway, they traced back to the captain, and from him back to the ex-slaves who had bitten him, and with the cooperation of the police the vampires were swiftly quarantined. The damage was already great, but the quick initial response was successful, enough to say that the number of victims was kept to the lowest amount possible. Unfortunately, there wasn't a means to save the people who had become vampires. Almost all of them resisted capture, and were either shot to death, or died from exposure to sunlight. The few surviving vampires, had also become like beasts after losing their own will, and were quarantined.

「So that's why I'm still being quarantined huh.」

Consequently, due to the danger, as the only one to have successfully kept his own will, Foddway was still being quarantined. Who knew when he could lose himself. In addition, while he had kept his own will it was still the case that he was a vampire. His long canine teeth were so sharp they didn't look like they belonged to a human. If he bit anyone with those teeth and slurped their blood,

that person would become a vampire. Instead of considering Foddway's rights as an individual, it was necessary to quarantine him as a dangerous creature.

「We shall endeavour to prevent you feeling inconvenienced. However, we cannot grant you permission to freely walk outside.」

「That's basically the definition of inconvenience though.」

Foddway responded with sarcasm to the man who had come to explain things to him. However, his tone was somehow frail. Foddway himself had yet to come to grips with the misfortune that had struck his own body. Even though it was a miracle that he had kept his own will, there was nothing to be happy about. Due to his insatiable cravings no matter how much water he drank, the despair he felt on swallowing some blood from a blood transfusion pack was something he couldn't describe. While it was at least better than being treated like a laboratory animal, to Foddway this incident was like a bolt from the blue, and it was a great shock that what had happened to him in the incident was, in a sense, worse than death. Since he was originally an old man, his life was simply one of dealing with the little time he had remaining. While death was something to be afraid of, it was something he had accepted. However, now he had suddenly become an unaging vampire, and was also having to live the rest of his life quarantined from others. Having fallen off the normal path of life, Foddway couldn't help feeling uneasy about his situation.

Thus, Foddway vanished from his position of being a bigwig in the financial world. Furthermore, his activities with the Sariera Society became quite limited. However, that might have been better for him instead. The Sariera Society would afterwards become heavily involved in a certain activity. Namely, taking into care and treating the victims of Potimas's human experiments. Potimas hadn't only been experimenting with vampires. There were many other forms of human experiments being carried out, and the total number of victims was immense. Due to the vampire incident coming to light, the rest were confirmed one after another. Potimas became an internationally wanted criminal from this.

Past Arc ①6

For as long as the girl could remember, she had spent the whole time in the same room. A person seeing that room would probably think that it was a hospital room or a laboratory, or perhaps even both. In truth, that room was a hospital room while also being a laboratory. It was a room used as a laboratory to treat the girl who was an experimental subject, while also being a hospital room to nurse the girl as a patient. Managed as an experimental subject, and nursed because it would be bothersome if she died. Being treated that way, and having nothing done to her apart from that, was both normal for the girl and also the entirety of her existence.

She spent all of her days simply lying on the bed. Days of being experimented on, and being treated. Perhaps one small mercy was that the greatest mind in the world was raising her, and he had appropriate treatment applied to her. In addition, possibly out of consideration for her healthy development for use in experiments, he had prepared proper educational tools for her to look at and so on in order to foster her mental development. The room was equipped with a TV, prepared so that she could undertake remote learning. The girl who had lived her entire life without taking a step out of that room, was at least able to receive proper education for her age.

However, while that might be true, given her distorted environment, it's a different matter as to whether her personality had developed properly. The girl generally lacked what were called emotions. Feeling nothing day in day out, simply passing the time in idleness. Simply being alive and nothing more. Thus, the girl was alive simply so that she could die someday. Although she was alive, being dead wouldn't be any different.

And her death was only a matter of time. Her body was not normal. She was born from an artificially produced sperm and egg. She was created as a chimera, using human genes with genes from other lifeforms inserted. That was her true form and that body that was contrary to god's providence suffered from defects, as if receiving divine punishment. The girl's body possessed the ability to create poison, a characteristic trait of the creature whose genes were

included - that creature being a spider. However, as she had an ability that humans did not have originally, naturally her body had no tolerance to poison. Her own body that was creating the poison was also being ruined because of it.

But that was not the only problem. The poison that the girl's body was creating consumed an enormous amount of energy in the process, as it was not something that a human body could do originally. Not only that, but additional energy was required in order to resist the poison afflicting her body. Furthermore, her internal organs were weakened by the poison, and her ability to digest and absorb energy were also weakened. Hence, her body required several times more energy than that of a healthy adult. Despite consuming so much, the girl had a slim body. Despite all she consumed, that didn't become nourishment for the girl's body, but rather it became poison that continued to ruin her body instead. However, she wouldn't be able to live at all without consuming so much. She was ruined from the moment she was born. It was a hard fact that she could die at any time.

Her daily existence was spent on a bed, unable to move about. That was the entirety of her world. An existence that was simply living until death arrived. An experimental subject that would merely leave behind some meagre results for her biological parent, Potimas. Until her life ended, her fate was to be one of never knowing any existence other than Potimas.

That destiny was overturned when Potimas joined the internationally wanted list.

For Potimas, joining the wanted list itself was a completely unforeseen event. However, he had been worried that maybe someday something like that could occur. Potimas was aware just how the world in general would respond to the research that he was conducting after all. He was aware, yet never once considered stopping. In addition, he was also vaguely aware that as he continued his research without stopping, that it had already gone beyond the point where it was possible to sweep it under the carpet. While Potimas was aware that he was superior to others, he was also aware that it wasn't absolute. If it had been absolute, he would have achieved his objective long ago. Since he hadn't done so, he knew that there were things he couldn't do despite his superiority. Precisely because he was aware of that, he knew that it was

impossible for everything to proceed according to plan. For that very reason, while it was unexpected, he didn't become flustered due to joining the wanted list.

Potimas first gathered together all his essential research material, before going into hiding. He disposed of the available documents that would be unwise to let fall into the hands of others, leaving aside the documents that would be okay to fall into the hands of others. Included amongst the later were the people who had been treated like laboratory animals. Potimas had built hidden research laboratories all over the place, repeating cruel experiments on humans, but abandoned the subjects along with the facilities. Potimas anticipated that the police forces that were hunting him down could enter those places.

In the end, the girl was taken into protection. It had been several days since Potimas had disappeared. Since the girl practically couldn't move from the bed, it was naturally impossible for her to drink and eat, and the intravenous drip that was providing her nutrients had been used up, so she was on the edge of the abyss between life and death. If the police had arrived only a little later, the girl would have lost her life. However, fortune favoured the girl, and she was transferred to a hospital. Her treatment was restarted there, drip-fed with nutrients, and somehow managed to pull through.

「Are you awake?」

When the girl opened her eyes, a woman was there. Apart from Potimas, she had only ever seen another person via the TV screen. In addition, because Potimas had never properly communicated with her, it was almost the first time in her life that anyone had begun a conversation with her.

「Nice to meet you. I am Sariel. What is your name?」

「Ah.....riel?」

「Ariel? What a coincidence. That is just like my name.」

The girl had simply tried to murmur the woman's name. However, with her weakened mouth, her pronunciation slipped, and the listener misunderstood. Everything was the result of chance. However, the girl who had never had a name, then gained a name at that moment. That girl whose fate had been only

to live until she died thus encountered the Goddess.

Past Arc ①7

「Let us eat.」

After Sariel spoke the grace before meals, the children reached out for the food arranged on the table. It might be expected that for children who were mostly in their growth period, that mealtimes could be likened to a battlefield. However, here the food was predetermined in each case, so there was no scramble over it. For children in their growth period that would often lead to small feelings of dissatisfaction, but here it was strictly forbidden to steal food from the other children. Even if they did so, they wouldn't be allowed to eat it. The reason being, is that the children here were dealing with unique circumstances, and accordingly their food was completely controlled.

This was an orphanage managed by Sariel. To be precise, it was both an orphanage and a hospital at the same time. The children in this orphanage, were test subjects from Potimas's experiments. It was an orphanage for the sake of the children taken into care from the research institutions that Potimas had scattered all over the place, to care for them and to treat them. They were all chimera, created by Potimas. They were living beings created using humans as a base, mixed with various plants and animals in forbidden experiments. The few surviving ones.

As a result of police forces searching Potimas's research institutions, it was established that there were many humans who had been subject to experiments. Most of them had lost their lives. Those where the experiment ended in failure, those who were a success but were short lived, and those who died when subjected to further experiments. In the experimental results, the fate of the victims was dispassionately recorded. They truly were treated like laboratory animals, their lives literally toyed with.

The ones cared for at the orphanage, were the children who miraculously managed to survive. Nevertheless, in order to deal with experimental after-effects and the handicaps that they were born with, they were looked after in an orphanage that was combined with a medical institution. At the same time, it was also to keep the children hidden from the inquisitive eyes of the world. A

small boy with green skin. A girl with slightly pointed ears. A girl with scales on her body. It was meaningful to conceal those children having a different outward appearance to normal.

With Potimas's disappearance, the whole world came to know that he had been placed on the wanted list. Then, the contents of his research also started leaking out from various places, becoming rumours amongst the public. From false rumours to valid facts, a mixture of fact and fiction was circulating around. Amongst those rumours, were ones that Potimas had created grotesque looking monsters. Those were true to a certain degree, and also incorrect to a certain degree. In truth, there were chimera made without using humans as a base. Potimas had created chimera by crossing various animals. Some of those certainly had a bizarre appearance. Amongst them, were chimera who should be called pseudo-dragons as they had dragonic elements supplied from who knows where inserted into them, and while they were not as large as the real thing they did display high combat abilities, and an incident occurred where the police who raided a laboratory were mowed down by a rampaging pseudo-dragon. Various exaggerated rumours combined to rush out. The problem was, whether the existence of the bizarre looking children could also be compromised. There were humorous rumours of children with bizarre forms due to experiments attacking people. It was like chatting about creepy ghost stories.

The people spreading such rumours weren't malicious. Because they never actually believed that such children really existed. They were just exaggerating rumours, and chatting about incredulous tales. However, the children who were victims of experiments did in fact exist, and since they did possess strange enough physical elements to be called bizarre, mere rumours had in fact become reality. If the world found out about them, it was obvious that the children would be hurt to a greater or lesser degree. For that very reason, the children were only acknowledged to exist to sympathetic people, and kept secret from the world.

Sariel took the initiative to take care of those children. Since the Sariel Society had lost their biggest donor in Foddway, the scope of their activities became noticeably reduced. However, because of that and another major factor, Sariel

had found it necessary to hide herself as well. Thus, she worked at the orphanage.

The reason why Sariel ended up having to go into hiding, was due to her opposition to MA Energy. Potimas who had since disappeared, was the one who announced the theory of MA Energy. According to that, it was possible to create endless amounts of energy without it ever being exhausted, and it was also extremely simple to achieve. In addition, the world was also astonished by the announcement of a way to achieve evolution of the human body.

However, Sariel had known. She knew that MA Energy was something that was stealing the very life force of the planet itself. The word “god” is a generic term for existences that possess large amounts of energy. Going by that theory, planets can also be called a species of god. Vast amounts of energy exists within planets. Energy that can’t be measured physically. That energy is the very life force of the planet itself, and if it is exhausted the planet will die. MA Energy was the energy of the planet, and the act of using it, meant nothing other than shortening the life of the planet.

Immediately after the announcement of the MA Energy theory, Sariel made an official statement regarding the truth of it. However, it wasn’t accepted. While part of the problem was that people were drawn to the convenience of MA Energy, the biggest problem was that Sariel’s words had no authority. MA Energy was seen as a mysterious energy and that nobody except Potimas knew what it was. Regardless of the theory, nobody even knew why such energy would gush forth. In other words, while she did make an official statement about the truth of MA Energy, it wasn’t possible to verify her statements as being correct. Unfortunately, various researchers also made statements about their own personal opinions on the true nature of MA Energy, and Sariel’s statement was taken as simply another opinion. In addition, Sariel was the head of a charitable organisation. Since she wasn’t a researcher or anything like one, almost nobody considered her to be credible. On the contrary, she was treated as a deranged person spouting thoughtless words.

Part of the reason for that, was that the Dragon Religion had made an almost identical statement. As the name suggests, the Dragon Religion is a group that worships the dragons. However, due to the Tragedy of Tetmaia and more,

people considered it to be common sense to fear and avoid dragons. The general population considered people who believed in dragons to be deranged. Having made the same announcement as such a bunch, people viewed what the Sariel Society said with suspicion. In spite of it being the truth.

Even so, Sariel assiduously advocated the dangers of MA Energy. Sariel was well aware of what could happen if it was used. She tried everything she could to try to persuade people that they absolutely must stop. However, it was to no avail.

Then, a faction that strongly supported the use of MA Energy, started to harass Sariel who was making negative statements about MA Energy. Threatening letters were sent to her house. When even that did not stop Sariel, they went as far as sending assassins. While Sariel wouldn't ever die from that, with there even being incidents of people unrelated to the Sariel Society being attacked, Sariel was forced to restrain her activities. Over the fate of the world, Sariel chose the safety of the people close to her. She couldn't be blamed for that.

And so, while using the occasion to hide herself, Sariel took care of the children. While she could hear the approaching destruction come closer moment by moment, it was also a time of peace.

Translation notes:

“Let us eat” - while this might not sound like much of a grace, the Japanese is basically this. Since it's so short and not obviously religious I went with a more literal translation. In Japanese, it was simply itadakimasu.

“Tragedy of Tetmaia” - as mentioned in Past Arc ②.

Past Arc ⑮

「Let's play!!」

While Ariel and another person, a boy with green skin, were sitting in the shade of a tree reading books, a lively girl charged towards them. The girl was the youngest amongst the orphans, with slightly pointed ears. Following behind, perhaps chasing after the girl, was a boy who was the oldest amongst the orphans. On seeing the girl leaping at the green skinned boy whose back struck the ground severely, Ariel was less flustered than the boy who was running behind. The reason for that, could be understood by looking at the boy's eyes. The boy's eyes were dull and cloudy, not focusing on anything. Due to Potimas's human experiments, the boy had completely lost his eyesight.

「Hey, Natalie! Running around so vigorously is dangerous you know!」

The blind boy separated Natalie, the girl with slightly pointed ears, from the green skinned boy.

「Kura, isn't it also dangerous for you to run?」

With the blind boy, Kura, being like the pot calling the kettle black, Ariel softly pointed that out.

「It's okay for me. Even if my eyes can't see, I can still see things.」

Although Ariel didn't really understand what Kura was saying, he often moved as though he could still somehow see, despite the fact that his eyes definitely couldn't see.

「Even so, be careful.」

「Sure. But, she's the bigger problem.」

Kura seized Natalie by the scruff of the neck, forcing her to stand up, then rapped her on the head with his knuckles.

「Owwie!」

「It hurts, so that's natural. Come on, apologise to Gob.」

「Ughh!」

「Stop balking. If you do something bad then apologise. Sariel-san taught that, right? Just like how you were hurt when I hit you, Gob was also hurt when you suddenly jumped at him, Natalie. Do you understand?」

「Ughh.」

「It, it's okay. You don't have to go so far as apologising. I was just a bit surprised, and it's not like it really hurt.」

Unable to ignore how Natalie looked when scolded, Gob, the boy with green skin who was in fact the victim defended her. Natalie's face lit up in delight at the helping hand, but Kura didn't allow it.

「That's no good. Natalie must properly apologise to be forgiven.」

Overwhelmed by Kura's absolutely unyielding spirit, Natalie reluctantly said "I'm sorry". However, Kura wouldn't go easy on her.

「You shouldn't be saying that to me, right? If you're going to apologise, make one to Gob. Also, such a half-hearted apology is no good either. Come on, apologise one more time.」

As prompted by Kura, Natalie turned to face Gob.

「I'm sorry.」

「It, it's okay.」

Gob quickly forgave the meekly apologising Natalie. Seeing that, Kura smiled.

「Well done. I'm sorry for hitting you.」

Kura patted Natalie on the head. That was the spot where Kura had rapped her with his knuckles.

「It's fine!」

As if the meek Natalie from a moment ago had never happened, Natalie's face lit up with a smile of joy.

「Gob-gob, let's go over there!」

And so, with his hands being pulled, Gob was dragged off. While leaving, Gob turned his head back to look at Ariel in concern, but Ariel made a gesture indicating "Go ahead and play". Ariel and Kura watched over them as Natalie and Gob ran off cheerfully.

「It's dangerous so don't run!」

As soon as Kura yelled that, Natalie fell over while involving Gob.

「Ahh, I told you so.」

「Not going to go help?」

「Gob is there so it's okay.」

Although he said that, it didn't really look okay to Ariel. Gob was panicking on seeing Natalie burst into tears after falling over. However, that was also a scene that happened all the time, so while it might not be entirely okay, perhaps it was still okay. Perhaps as proof of that, Gob desperately began to comfort the crying Natalie. While Ariel and Kura watched over them, Gob awkwardly managed to sooth Natalie, successfully stopping her tears. Afterwards, this time without running, they went to join another group of kids who were playing.

「Are you sure you won't join them, Kura?」

「I'm too old to be playing around already.」

Kura shrugged his shoulders while saying that, but from the perspective of the world in general he was definitely a child. Although he was the oldest in the orphanage, he was definitely still at a suitable age to be wanting to play. Ariel guessed that Kura was staying beside her out of consideration.

In all the orphanage, Ariel had a particularly frail body. Although she had improved a lot since the time she couldn't even get off the bed, she could only just about manage to walk around, so running about wasn't possible. Reading a book under the shade of a tree was about her limit. For that reason, Ariel was often being watched over by the orphanage staff or by Sariel's side. Speaking of Sariel, she was currently surrounded by boys and girls, and being mobbed. So Kura was being a substitute for Sariel who had her hands full.

「Thank you.」

「What for?」

「Just like how you gotta apologise when you do something wrong, when you feel gratitude you also gotta put that into words, right?」

While Kura was playing dumb, rather than answer him directly, Ariel repeated what she had been taught.

「Kura, just now, you were a bit like Sariel-sama.」

At Ariel's words, Kura scratched his head, seemingly embarrassed. Ariel didn't know this, but he had repeated Sariel's words from when she had scolded Natalie previously.

Sariel's expression didn't change much, but she was popular amongst the orphans. That much was to be expected as she acted as a foster parent to the children, kindly taking care of them. Having come into contact with Sariel's warmth, while Ariel was still reserved, she had regained human emotions.

The boys and girls who had been treated like laboratory animals, played and smiled like the children they were in the small miniature garden.

「What did you say?」

Gyurie asked in a trembling voice. The person being asked, returned the look with a cold expression, as if seeing something dull.

「We will cull the humans. That's what I said.」

On that day, the dragons bared their fangs at humanity.

Past Arc ①9

Dragons are the supreme race. Regardless of whether or not that's actually true, that's what the dragons themselves believe. And so, there is no way that such supreme dragons would not be dissatisfied with the current situation where Sariel is restraining them. In the past, Gyurie was the same. At the same time, the dragons are staying on this planet for a particular objective, not due to charity. They couldn't let the humans take actions that were contrary to that objective without responding. Even if that would result in hostilities with Sariel.

「So, you have been tasked with stalling me then?」

「It seems so.」

With Sariel staring right back at him, Gyurie self-consciously turns his gaze away. The location is the reception room at the orphanage. Gyurie was a frequent visitor to the orphanage, and would normally simply enter rather than wait at the reception. However, sensing something wrong, the receptionists guided Sariel to where Gyurie was. Anyone could tell that Gyurie's state was strange at a glance, not just Sariel. With him making such suspicious behaviour, even someone slow on the uptake like Sariel could guess that something had happened. And then, while half-interrogating him, she got information about the dragons' movements from Gyurie.

「So, what are you going to do?」

「I will obstruct them of course. That is my mission after all.」

To Gyurie's question, Sariel gave an immediate reply. As normal.

「Is that really your mission?」

However, in response to Gyurie's follow-on question, Sariel wasn't able to give an immediate reply.

「It can't be the case that you don't understand the implications of what the humans are currently doing. If your mission is to protect the primitive creatures, then wouldn't stopping the humans to prevent them from destroying this planet be the appropriate actions for you to take?」

Lifting his head, Gyurie continues to talk as if having resolved himself.

「Of course, I also think that eradicating the humans or something would be going too far. However, it would be better to take some kind of action. So long as that really is your mission.」

Gyurie gazes at her, as if testing her. Sariel cannot look away from that. However, she doesn't even begin to speak either.

Sariel herself was aware that her actions were not optimal. However, she hadn't doubted those actions until now. Sariel is a stray angel. Her existence is like that of a device without any will of her own, that does nothing except to faithfully carry out her mission. To be more precise, she has become an existence that is unable to decide anything by her own will, except when carrying out her mission. Just like a machine, she continues to naively process only the data that was established beforehand. Even if there is a bug in the data that was established beforehand. A machine cannot doubt itself. In the same way, even while Sariel is aware that her actions were not optimal, she hadn't doubted those actions until now.

However, just now, from Gyurie's question, Sariel thought this - is doing things this way really okay? For Sariel, this is the first time she had ever doubted. Thus far, Sariel has continued to think about and take actions for only one thing - how best to carry out her mission more efficiently. However, from another viewpoint, her thoughts are nothing other than a deviation from her original mission. Sariel's original mission, is to protect the creatures living on this planet from the interference of other gods. So long as the other gods don't interfere, there is nothing more for her to do. Despite that, Sariel has taken the initiative to intervene with mankind. Even though Sariel is a god. From that moment on, she has practically abandoned her mission herself. Despite that, Sariel had continued to believe that she was correctly carrying out her mission without any doubts. Then, Gyurie had tossed out that question. Due to that, Sariel experienced doubt about her own actions for the first time in her life.

「Sariel. Isn't it about time that you stop binding yourself to your mission? You can live as you like. You can forget your mission, and live however you wish.」

It was impossible for Sariel to understand Gyurie's words. Even though she

could understand the meaning of the words themselves, she didn't understand what it meant to live as she likes. For Sariel, living means to accomplish her mission, and her own preferences have nothing to do with it. Or rather, even if she could feel her own preferences, she couldn't understand them. She could feel her own preferences of course. However, she wasn't able to comprehend the meaning of those feelings. As a result, she had continued to ignore those preferences.

「I... do not understand.」

「Figures.」

Gyurie hadn't expected that words alone would be enough to untangle the blockage in Sariel's heart. However, from Sariel's behaviour, he could see that the result was better than he had expected.

「However, that does not change what I must do.」

If there was one miscalculation, it was that what Sariel wanted to do from the bottom of her heart and stopping the dragons were in alignment. Gyurie's words of wanting her to live as she likes certainly did resound in Sariel's heart. Precisely because they did resound, they blew away the faint doubt that had been born in her heart. Because what Sariel wanted to do was to protect the people. That blew away her doubts about whether her actions were really the optimal way to carry out her mission.

「Wait!」

「Gyurie. I have taken the liberty to consider you a friend. Therefore, please do not do something that will make me kill you.」

Gyurie was surprised by those words. Both the fact that Gyurie was called her friend, and that despite that fact that she still intended to kill him if he got in the way. Then, while Gyurie was stiff with shock, Sariel left him behind in the reception room.

「While I am away, please take care of the orphans.」

While leaving, she made that selfish request. Gyurie silently stared at the closed door. With a confounded expression. As a dragon, as Sariel's friend, and as a man who was fascinated by Sariel's heart, Gyurie was unable to decide what actions he should take. The correct actions to take as a dragon, would be

to stall Sariel at risk of his life. Even though there was an overwhelming difference in power between them, Gyurie would at least be able to stall for time. For example, by taking the children hostage or something. However, from the moment when he silently allowed Sariel to leave, he couldn't accomplish that. Then, should he stay by Sariel's side? That would mean betraying the dragons. For Gyurie who had prided himself on being a dragon until now, that wasn't an option. In the end, Gyurie did nothing, a terribly half-baked and passive option.

A large-scale attack by dragons occurred simultaneously all over the world. That would normally have instantly resulted in severe damage to mankind. However, Sariel took prompt action. And above all, by using MA Energy there was a desperate resistance made by mankind using the many weapons that Potimas had designed, leading to the war becoming more bogged down than the dragons had expected. The dragons attacked mankind while escaping from Sariel, and until Sariel arrived at the scene the humans could withstand the attacks. That's how the situation developed.

Past Arc ②0

With heavy footsteps, the people walked along while avoiding the mountains of rubble. Walking ahead at the front of the group was a man in a dusty suit that would surely have been spotless in normal times. The people following on behind him were similarly dirty, with their faces showing a sense of hopelessness. Until just the day before they had been living in peace. But on this day, that was suddenly lost. The buildings were flattened, the roads including the ground itself were turned upside down, and the weapons that should have stopped the destruction were scattered around in pieces. In this hellish landscape there was one thing that particularly stood out - as if skewering a high-rise apartment block, was a corpse. Of a dragon.

Similar scenes had happened all over the world. Suddenly the dragons had bared their fangs at mankind. Faced with that terrible power, there wasn't much that mankind could do. Even by using weapons made with plentiful amounts of MA Energy that were developed by Potimas, it wasn't possible to oppose the dragons. Even with weapons that were beyond anything developed until now, the most they could possibly do was to stall the dragons for a small amount of time. However, by creating that small amount of time, in the sense that it was enough to reduce the damage until Sariel could arrive on the scene, it could be said that using the weapons was meaningful. Those very weapons were what had incurred the wrath of the dragons though.

As for why the dragons suddenly started attacking, the people gradually came to find out over time. Along with the truth of what exactly was the thing known as MA Energy that they had been using. They heard it from nothing other than the mouths of the dragons who were committing the atrocities. At first, the higher-ups in the countries that were promoting MA Energy tried to conceal the truth. However, due to the development of global communications, such attempts to hush the truth couldn't last long. Gradually the truth seeped out.

Even so, people couldn't part with MA Energy. If for no other reason than to protect themselves from the dragons. Faced with the power of dragons, there was little that people could do to resist. However, that was still more than

nothing at all. Ironically enough, in order to make use of that little resistance, they couldn't avoid using MA Energy. And then, they waited. For salvation in the form of Sariel.

Along with the truth about MA Energy, the fact that Sariel's existence was saving mankind, also came to be known amongst the people. Only Sariel could contend with the dragons. And so, the only form of resistance that people could take, was to buy time until Sariel could come rushing.

Even so, the damage was great. Countless towns were devastated, many people died, and those who survived lost their homes. They came to know. To know just how merciless dragons were, all too much like an embodiment of irrational power. To know despair, from their utter inability to resist.

Two beings countered that despair. One was Sariel. The only one who could contend with dragons, the saviour of mankind. The other was Potimas Hyphenath. The discoverer of MA Energy, and the main cause of the current situation. For that reason, anticipating this situation, he had hastily prepared to oppose the dragons in advance.

Naturally, Potimas was always aware of just what MA Energy was. Including what would happen if it was used. Also, that it was possible that the dragons and Sariel would try to prohibit it. In case that happened, Potimas had rushed to develop weapons. During spare moments in his primary quest to achieve perpetual youth and longevity, he disseminated blueprints for weapons to many countries. If he did that, then those countries would make weapons of their own accord. The countries that obtained the everlasting energy known as MA Energy, began creating weapons in order to compete with each other. In order to stay one step ahead of the other countries. Potimas was internationally wanted, but his intellect was highly valuable. For that reason, many countries supported Potimas behind the scenes, in return for being provided with a part of that intellect. Not realising that they were dancing on top of Potimas's palm.

And so an anti-god defence network was constructed. If there were any miscalculations in Potimas's plans, it was that the dragons took action unexpected early, and that he had underestimated their combat potential. He had estimated that even if the weapons that he had personally developed weren't able to beat the dragons, then they should at least put up a good fight.

However, considering the results, rather than being able to put up a good fight, playing for time was the best they could do. Even so, because reinforcements in the form of Sariel existed, they were still meaningful. If Sariel had never sided with mankind, then the conflict would have ended with mankind being trampled down.

At this rate, he'd be killed by the dragons eventually. With that sense of impending crisis, Potimas put even more effort into his research. It's not like he had been cutting corners on that until now. However, faced with the dread of impending death, Potimas threw off the last remaining common sense remaining within him, turning to even more extreme and ghastly experiments. And finally he achieved it - to convert living things into MA Energy. Then, by using that extracted MA Energy for evolution experiments, Potimas made himself evolve. In a method that differed to any evolution until now. Focusing on a method of evolution to lengthen the lifespan, Potimas succeeded in obtaining a lengthy lifespan far beyond any evolutionary improvements thus far. He evolved into a species that would be called elves in later generations.

However, even with his extended lifespan, the looming threat of the dragons was still going strong. No matter how many dragons Sariel slaughtered, mankind would be destroyed before all the dragons could be killed. Sariel was alone against multiple dragons after all. On completing that calculation, Potimas chose to escape rather than to resist. Taking refuge in space. He made rapid progress to achieve that.

However, luckily or unluckily, Potimas did not take off into space. Before that, the dragons left. While robbing the planet of its MA Energy completely.

Past Arc ②1

The dragons had attacked people suddenly. Mankind, which had been living in peace, was faced with a crisis that threatened its existence. Complete ruin was narrowly avoided thanks to the saviour known as Sariel, but if the dragons continued their offensive it would still be just a matter of time. However, just as suddenly as it began, the dragons' attacks abruptly stopped. But, that wasn't something to celebrate. As the dragons had triggered a form of destruction that was even more severe than their direct attacks.

To the dragons, while it couldn't be said that it was trivial matter if the planet was destroyed, it wasn't a big problem either. The dragons settled on this planet in order to eventually rule over it as part of their domain. For the dragons who considered themselves to be supreme beings, ruling over the planet was to be expected for them. Consequently, a planet that they couldn't rule over had no merit. Being unable to get their plans back on track due to the interfering existence known as Sariel, with the planet due to be destroyed anyway, there was no point in trying to rule over it. Therefore, the dragons took action that would gain them a benefit, albeit a small one. That's all it was to the dragons, all it was to send the planet towards destruction. Even if they took no action anyway, the planet would still be destroyed in a few centuries. In which case, there was no problem with bringing that forwards a bit. Besides, it would be bothersome if the inhabitants of this planet took off into space. Exterminating them before that could happen would be killing two birds with one stone. Thus, the dragons seized the planet's MA Energy.

「Is this the end?」

The President muttered that. Nobody responded to that. The room was filled with a heavy atmosphere.

In the country of Dazdoldia, the use of MA Energy had been banned until the very end. The people had already become aware that MA Energy was the very life force of the planet, as well as the fact that if the usage of it continued then the planet would be on the path towards its collapse. And also, that the dragons had suddenly attacked for that reason. That was the explanation given via the

Dragon Religion. The Sariel Society had issued a similar warning. Most countries had ignored that, and kept on using MA Energy to enjoy the benefits. While other countries gazed on it like it was sweet nectar, the President stubbornly refused to allow the use of MA Energy even so. Due to the bitter reaction from the citizens of the country, demonstrations seeking to lift the ban on MA Energy were almost a daily occurrence. However, the President refused to bend despite all that, responding that the usage of MA Energy inside the country would be severely punished. And now, the very same President was being called the wisest ruler in the world. Those who had been hurling abuse at him until just recently, were now singing his praises. Even on hearing that, the furrow in the President's brow wouldn't slacken.

「What's the situation?」

「Abnormal weather has broken out in many places, and strange phenomena are occurring.」

「There are frequent riots occurring between the citizens, with frequent murders and crimes being committed.」

「The rate of suicides is increasing. There are many mass suicides amongst the members of the Dragon Religion.」

「The distribution of food is facing delays.」

The successive reports expose the hopeless situation. Naturally it's hopeless. Since the end is approaching.

「.....How long... do we have left?」

In response to the President's question, nobody offered an immediate reply. As if they were afraid to say it, not a single person opened their mouth to talk. However, that couldn't last forever.

「In Potimas Hyphenath's opinion, we might have a year.」

On hearing Potimas's name, the President lays bare his annoyance. It wasn't possible to lay all the blame for current situation at Potimas's door. However, Potimas was the genesis of it all without doubt. Due to one man's delusions, the planet was on the path towards collapse. However, the only one who had the potential to break through this situation was again, nobody else but Potimas. For that reason, no matter how repugnant it was, Potimas couldn't be

restrained. Due to those circumstances, the President would get in a bad mood just by hearing Potimas's name.

「However, that was only for how long the planet could retain its original form, and in his opinion the time limit for sustaining life would be lower than that.」

「By the time that's determined, the situation will have gotten proportionally worse.」

The implication being, if you're going to make a decision then do it quickly. Since the others have come this far with the President, they would decide to follow the President's will. So no matter how outrageous a decision he makes, once the President who is being called the wisest ruler in the world makes a decision, it will surely be accepted.

The President has the right to decide, but, he doesn't seem about to state anything. Due to the ban on using MA Energy, the frequency of attacks on the country of Dazdoldia was low. While other countries have received catastrophic damage, here it was comparatively minor. In addition, with the reputation the President has, it could be said that no country can oppose Dazdoldia right now. For that very reason, the President must make a prudent decision. Since it was a situation where whatever Dazdoldia determines to be the right answer will be treated as the right answer even if it's wrong.

「Sigh...」

The President breathes a long sigh. Not matter how much he thinks, in the end, the conclusion he arrives at is the same. As the President, as the person who stands for all the people, no matter how hard it is to accept, he must make that decision.

「Is there... no other way?」

Rather than being an inquiry, his mutter was instead to confirm the answer within himself. Also, there was nobody who responded to him. They couldn't respond. A long, long silence enveloped the room.

「How goes it with Potimas Hyphenath?」

「We've found him.」

「Then, restrain him immediately!」

「Yessir!」

「Once he is restrained, have him start the preparations.」

「.....Yessir!」

That was the moment when the man who could by no exaggeration be called the representative of mankind made his decision. In response to that decision, everyone in the conference room bowed their heads.

The President alone, stood up. Then, walked up to a wall. A dull sound resounded. It was the sound of the President beating the wall.

「Just who, just who is the wisest ruler in the world. I'm, I'm nothing but the most shameful one!」

While screaming, he punched the wall again. And again. Again, and again.

「President! President!」

He must have punched the wall really hard, as a cabinet minister rushed to stop him on seeing blood trickling down his fists. However, even so, the President continued to punch the wall. It took three people to pull the President away from the wall, and finally his self-mutilation stopped.

「I'm scum! Total scum!」

However, his words didn't stop. He wouldn't stop hurling abuse at himself.

「President! President! You are a splendid person! You are not scum in the least!」

A cabinet minister spoke his true feelings. However, that didn't shake the President's heart.

「To repay the kindness that was received with ingratitude. How can you say that I'm not scum!? Dammit, dammit!」

The President screamed while breathing heavily, and sat down in his chair as if losing his strength.

「My name, must be spoken as a curse forevermore.」

「That's...」

「It must. It must be. Therefore, we must make that future.」

In front of the President's tragic resolution, the cabinet ministers suck into silence.

「I shall stop at nothing now. Like the scum I am, I will do whatever it takes to protect the people. Until my own soul disappears. That is, the only thing someone as shameless as me can do.」

With bloodshot eyes, yet, with unwavering conviction. Thus, the President declared.

「We shall follow you to the depths of hell, President Dustin.」

The cabinet ministers bowed their heads. They were a shameless group, however, they had solidarity in their firm conviction.

And so, they began to move. Towards Potimas's proposal to revive the planet. The proposal to revive the planet by returning what was lost - by converting the colossal amount of energy held by the Goddess Sariel into MA Energy. That amounted to asking Sariel to die for them. To one who had saved mankind by continuing to stand up against the dragons. They knew it was shameless, but even so they didn't stop. They couldn't stop. Everything was to save mankind from its own foolishness.

Past Arc ②②

To sacrifice Sariel in order to allow the planet to survive. There were people who approved of that. There were people who were against that. The world is split into two camps, but the overwhelming majority were in favour. Even if they have feelings of guilt for repaying the kindness that was received with ingratitude, with the way things are going now they could only die together with the planet. That being the case, people would want to survive, by ignoring such feelings of guilt. Even amongst the people who were against it, there was only a tiny few who were actually willing to take action in order to speak up and protect Sariel.

In practice, the tiny few who actually took action were from the Sariel Society, who were suppressed. They rejected the demand to hand over Sariel, forming an intense opposition. Even so, the Dazdoldia army was sent out and due to that they were suppressed. Under the orders of the President Dustin who had fully resolved himself, they took tough measures. But due to the President's conscience, so that there would be no deaths, non-lethal equipment was used. In addition, the Sariel Society stuck to non-lethal forms of opposition. They were originally a charitable organisation. They saved people out of kindness, and would never want to harm others. For that very reason, due to their beliefs, while they opposed with all their might they also clearly avoided anything that could kill others. Faced with that noble spirit, the Dazdoldia army's morale had sunk remarkably. Everyone in the Dazdoldia army was aware that what they were doing was shameless. However, they had no alternative but to keep on attacking the way they were. If the Sariel Society hadn't stuck to non-lethal methods, the army wouldn't have hesitated to annihilate them. President Dustin was fully prepared to carry out such terrible actions. In the end, the Sariel Society's refusal to kill is what saved their own lives.

When the Dazdoldia army broke into the place where Sariel was, she was surrounded by children clinging to her. With children completely surrounding her, as if they were playing a game of peas in a pod, it was as though they were restraining Sariel. In actual fact, the children were restraining Sariel. Because

they understood that if they didn't, then Sariel would leave.

「If you try to remove us by force then we shall bite our tongues and die. No matter what, if you are going to go then do it after killing us.」

Giving that threat to Sariel, the children clinging to her made themselves hostages to restrain her. The children knew. They knew that if they didn't restrain her, then Sariel would willingly sacrifice herself. Or rather, that she would even take the initiative to do so. Therefore, they restrained her. They knew that Sariel wouldn't be able to move when faced with their threat.

For the children, particularly for the older children, they knew that it was a futile struggle that could achieve nothing more than buying some time. Even the younger children were somewhat aware of that. Even so, they had no other option. To the children, it didn't matter that she was called the Goddess or a saviour, it didn't matter that the dragons cursed her as being a stray angel who couldn't see the big picture, and neither did it matter if they were scored as fools by bystanders. From the children's point of view, Sariel wasn't such an exaggerated person - she was simply their mother who was kind but had a bit of difficulty expressing her emotions. That's all they wanted.

The soldiers pulled off the screaming and crying children from Sariel. No matter how much the children insulted them, bit them, scratched them, the soldiers did not resist, but even so they were relentlessly pulled off from Sariel. Finally, when the last one was pulled off, Sariel was taken away by the soldiers.

「Everyone. Please live happily. But in peace.」

Those few words were all she left them with.

Sariel readily agreed to sacrifice herself by converting herself into energy for the planet.

「That is my mission.」

That's what she said. When Sariel said that to the President, he bowed his head as deeply as he could.

Finally, the day arrived. Until that day, Potimas had been kept restrained, forced to develop equipment without any say in the matter. To prevent him from doing anything strange, he was strictly monitored as well. Potimas

developed the equipment he was told to, improving his equipment for converting living beings into MA Energy to be able to convert Sariel into MA Energy. The strict monitoring was so that he couldn't sneakily add anything to the equipment. Thus, with Potimas being restrained and his life held in the hands of others, there was no way that he wouldn't do as he was told. The President had discerned that Potimas's objective was immortality. He knew that since Potimas held his own life more dearly than anything else, he would have no choice but to cooperate.

At least, that would be the case if it was the real Potimas.

The Potimas held by the country of Dazdoldia, was not the real one. It was clone of Potimas. Before Potimas had begun investigations into magecraft, Potimas had investigated whether it was possible to achieve immortality with cloning technology. From there, he was able to create human clones. However, that wasn't what Potimas had been seeking. The created clone was simply a physical clone. While it was a genetically identical existence, it wasn't Potimas himself. It was simply a different person having the same appearance as Potimas. If combined with his techniques to transplant the brain, it could be used as a spare body, but it wouldn't achieve immortality itself. Even if the body is changed, the brain itself would still be deteriorating and soon or later his life would end.

However, this cloning technique was of great use for future research. Potimas mass produced clones of himself and had those clones research immortality. The ability of the clones was no different to Potimas himself. Of course, they couldn't gain his accumulated experience and knowledge in a day. However, while there were huge problems with his character, there is no doubt that Potimas was a genius, and there was also no doubt that his clones were also superior. Also, that problematic character was dealt with by the original. To the original they were simply pawns in order to further his research and they were not himself nor did they have the same thoughts. The clones were instilled with knowledge in order to further the research and were only granted a mechanical self-conscious that was lacking an ego. Unlike the original they had no fear of death.

The truth behind the "Potimas" that was held by the country of Dazdoldia,

was that it was simply one of those clones. The original had sent it out. The original Potimas had only one objective. Which was to get his hands on Sariel's power. If dragons could be considered monsters that were a symbol of death, then she would easily be an even greater monster. If Potimas could get his hands of Sariel's power, then he would have nothing to fear.

However, Potimas himself didn't have the capacity to hold that energy. Based on his repeated experiments with human evolution, it was determined that a human body could not tolerate being supplied with an excess of energy. The human body could only accept a quantity of energy that would improve the physical ability a bit and extend the lifespan somewhat. If the energy of a god could be absorbed as is, then it would have been better, but that was impossible. Therefore, Potimas decided to get hold of Sariel's energy for a different reason. Namely, the weapon of model that would be called the Gloria Ω in the future. A weapon smeared in blood, by creating a receptacle for a large quantity of souls from his own clones.

For MA Energy, unless it is converted into electric power or the like then it is impossible to store it for a long period of time. However, the efficiency of that conversion was extremely bad. To properly gain hold of Sariel's power, it was necessary to store it as MA Energy. For that very reason, something to act as a receptacle was needed, namely a container for the soul. Potimas created clones of himself for that reason. Sariel's power would then be poured into those receptacles.

There was nothing sneakily added to the equipment created by the clone. It was certainly the case that he had utilised the knowledge that Potimas possessed to create equipment that could decompose Sariel and pour that power into the planet. But, that was simply in a way such that as the energy was poured into the planet it could also be extracted by someone else. Potimas intended to collect that energy, and flee from the planet. So long as he could get hold of Sariel's power, there was nothing to be afraid of. Then, he would have no attachments remaining to this almost broken planet. He would set off into space, and simply take his time to research immortality.

And so, Sariel stepped into the equipment. While the President and others were watching over her, the decomposition of Sariel began, and that energy

was poured into the planet. Then Potimas would seize that energy. Or at least, that's what should have happened.

The moment that Sarel stepped into the equipment, the world was transformed.

Translation notes:

“as if they were playing a game of peas in a pod” - the actual phrase used is that it was like they were playing “Oshikura Manju” which is described as a children’s game in which three or more stand back-to-back in a circle and jostle.

Past Arc ②③

Gyurie was taking action. Even for Gyurie, the fact that the dragons would run off with the planet's energy was beyond his expectations. The far too excessive actions committed by his own race were such that he was struck dumb. However, there's no turning back what had already happened. Also, it was all too easy to imagine that Sariel would sacrifice herself at this rate. He was convinced that Sariel would likely offer up her own life while saying something like "That is my mission".

In regards for that, Gyurie asserted that he himself should be the one to undertake such a role. As a dragon himself, he should take responsibility for his own race. However, Sariel had shaken her head in response. That was not because she was concerned about Gyurie, however. There was a much more practical reason. Namely, that with only Gyurie's power, it was a fact that it wouldn't be enough to compensate for the lost energy. While Gyurie is a god, he is overwhelmingly inferior compared to Sariel. The energy he had was utterly insufficient to maintain a whole planet. To save the planet, there was no alternative but to sacrifice Sariel.

He understood that. However, he couldn't accept it. Sariel had kept fighting for mankind. She had continued to work for mankind. Having all that end this way, was never something that he could accept.

So Gyurie considered - what could he do to save Sariel? They could flee together to another planet. But Sariel would never accept that. Sariel would never accept a choice that abandoned this planet or mankind. That being the case, it means that a method was needed to save the planet that didn't require Sariel to save it. In order to achieve that, there was no choice but to rely upon other gods.

The gods on this planet, were Sariel and the dragons. The dragons had left Gyurie, and left the planet. Of course, the dragons could not be relied upon in this case. Which in turn means, it was necessary to rely upon gods other than dragons out in the universe. That being said, it was a very difficult problem. The dragons were deeply involved in this case. The dragons possessed a great deal

of influence in the universe. There were few gods who would be willing to poke their noses into a case where the dragons were involved.

Of course, that didn't mean that there were none at all. What was required was a power that opposed dragons, while at the same time be willing to take action in response to a request. However, that was a two-edged sword. After all, Gyurie himself was a dragon. He could even be killed on the spot. Not only that, but if things went badly then it was conceivable that the other gods could commence an attack on the planet that Sariel was on. Also, since this involves a power that opposed dragons, it would have to be a great power that is equivalent to or exceeds the dragons. If such a thing takes action, then the dragons might be provoked into a hostile response. In addition, if something happened to the planet that the dragons had only just recently disposed of, then they simply wouldn't be able to ignore it. In the worse case, the two sides would come into conflict.

Then, what about the angels? They couldn't be counted upon either. Angels are a race that faithfully abide by the mission that they were given. While there are exceptions, it is nearly impossible to get through to them. In this case, not only could Gyurie be killed, but the stray angel that is Sariel could also be targeted. Also, the angels are a power that opposes dragons. If the angels are called, that would likely result in them provoking the dragons.

Also, the current balance of powers between the gods was in an exceedingly dangerous state. If a conflict between great powers is carelessly triggered, then it is conceivable that the flames of war could spread. In such a scenario, the planet that Sariel is at would be at the forefront of taking damage. As much as possible, the balance of powers between the gods mustn't be provoked.

For the above reasons, only an independant god that wouldn't take sides could be relied upon. Yet it would have to be a god such that even if the dragons are provoked, they still wouldn't be liable to take any reckless actions. On top of that, it would have to be a capricious god that be willing to listen to such a request. Considering the severity of the conditions, the number of gods that cleared them was only... one.

『Well well, this seems to be a remarkably interesting situation indeed.』

And sure enough, Gyurie was now facing that god. Though, it was hard to say that he was actually in a situation of facing another.

Surrounded by impenetrable darkness, Gyurie was there. He couldn't see the other party. All he could hear was a voice. Gyurie was certain that he had teleported to where that god was. Even Gyurie knew where that god resided. The reason being was that this god was well known for being one that you must absolutely never start a fight with.

Variously known as: the god of the end, the death god, the evil god, the absolute paradox..... While being known by many names, nobody knew the true name of this god. While being an independant god that wasn't affiliated with any power, this was a god so mighty that no other power could ever disregard her.

「Please, I beg you to be of assistance, nameless god.」

『Ah, I suppose it is inconvenient to be nameless. Let's see, then please call me D.』

In the darkness, the voice of the god who called herself D resounded. Although low-ranked, Gyurie was still a god. Even to Gyurie's eyes, the darkness was completely impenetrable. On the contrary, even the sensation of his own body was weak. It was like he was experiencing a delusion that he was being completely swallowed by the darkness. However, Gyurie had the sense that if D ever felt like it then that would no longer be a mere delusion.

On teleporting, he was in this dark empty space. Gyurie guessed that it was a type of ability that manipulated space itself in order to isolate him, but that was nothing but a guess. There was nothing at all that he could figure out about the construction of the technique or anything else. From the moment Gyurie that was captured by this space, he became unable to do anything. That's just how great the difference in power was between them. All that Gyurie could do, was to speak about the circumstances and request for assistance. Considering the difference in power, all he could say was that at least he wasn't summarily executed.

For the first time in Gyurie's life, he experienced a sensation of fear. While he had felt a faint sense of that when he first met Sarel, that was no comparison

to this. Although Gyurie was a dragon, it was like he was an ant on the verge of being crushed underfoot. In addition, the source of that fear wasn't just because he sensed the difference in their power. What this god who called herself D wanted to obtain was completely unknown.

Requesting the assistance of D, was pretty much a gamble. Amongst the gods who were able to save Sariel, it is certainly the case that D satisfied the requirements the most. It was also the case that she satisfied the requirements far more than any other god. However, whether or not she would agree to take part was unknown. D's behavioral principal was, "is it interesting or not". That's it. If she finds it interesting, she can be a saviour or a god of destruction. That is the existence known as D.

She was a terribly irrational existence. From the outset, not only dragons but Sariel and the other gods, all take action in a systematic way, as far as Gyurie is aware. At the time when the dragons had run off with the energy from the planet, while he thought it was unbelievable, at the same time he could grasp the reason. That being the logic that dragons operate under. Gyurie is aware that instead, he is the one that doesn't behave like a dragon. Dragons have a dragon's way of thinking, and they take action based on that. There was a clear logic operating there.

However, D doesn't have that. Taking actions on a whim, with no kind of method. And worst of all, this god possesses an immense amount of power. In spite of being a lone horseman, her power is so great that dragons must be on guard against her more so than any great power. However, precisely for that reason, Sariel can be saved. Having that power, if you can just get her to think that something is "interesting", then this god will take action.

『It is interesting indeed.』

And so, the gamble was a success.

『Very well. I shall lend you my power. However, I shall only guarantee life-support for the planet and Sariel. As for whether or not those two can be saved, let us bet upon the people of the planet.』

Gyurie won the gamble. However, that was also the beginning of a long painful battle for Gyurie.

Translation notes:

Two be clear on two things: Firstly, in Japanese, D's gender is never referenced in this chapter - I'm referring to her as "she" for convenience. Secondly, D's speech patterns are exactly how we see it elsewhere: in Japanese, D's speech patterns are like a modern person in a relatively formal setting. In a sense, it is completely neutral, without any sense of superiority or inferiority.

Past Arc ②4

「How do you do.」

The moment that Sariel stepped into the equipment, she realised that she had been isolated in another dimension due to someone's interference. She also realised that the same someone was inside the darkness that was right in front of her. While Gyurie hadn't been able to see through this darkness, Sariel was capable of piercing through it to the hidden truth. The one who had greeted her, was a girl. She appeared to be just one step short of being an adult, young enough that she could still properly be called a girl. However, that expressionless face did not fit her young appearance in the least. An expressionless face that makes one think of bottomless darkness, just the darkness surrounding her.

「Please call me D if you wish. Now then, with my self-introduction out of the way, let us proceed to the negotiation. Dispensing with the small-talk, I shall plainly state my business. Please come play with me.」

While it was an invitation to come play, it also sounded like a devil's invitation. In fact, that impression wasn't mistaken. While D spoke of playing and spoke of having fun, as if Sariel wasn't involved at all, that expression showed absolutely no hint of joy or pleasure. If it had been someone other than Sariel in this place, that person would surely have felt terror at the something that had taken on the shape of a person and the eerie sense of it trying to imitate a person.

However, what Sariel was feeling was not terror, but a pure desire to fight. This thing that was in front of her, should not exist. Its very existence was a sin. While she might be a stray, Sariel is still an angel, and she instinctively felt that the existence in front of her would be harmful to the world. She felt that whatever the difference in combat potential between them, that even had she forgotten the mission she had adhered to for so long, this thing must be defeated at all costs even if they both die.

「Oh, I would rather that you do not consider trying to fight or refuse this.

Otherwise, I will not be responsible for what happens to your precious children, okay?」

However, Sariel could not unleash her power. With those words that had no power by themselves, Sariel was constrained. Those words prevented Sariel from moving, more firmly than any binding magecraft could have. With just those words, Sariel was completely constrained. It had been called a negotiation, but it was in fact a threat.

「What do you desire?」

「Splendid. I shall have you become the core of the large-scale magecraft that I will then activate.」

Taking Sariel's words as an acknowledgement, D projected an overview of that magecraft. It was something like a blueprint of the magecraft, such that a viewer looking over it would be able to understand what sort of magecraft it was. Unfortunately however, Sariel wasn't able to understand the nature of the magecraft. Sariel was an angel optimised for battle. While she was specialised in destruction, she was poor at performing detailed analysis on the contents of magecraft.

「This is a technique in order to replenish the energy of this planet.」

Whether or not D knew that Sariel couldn't understand the contents of the magecraft, D began to explain. Just from that first line, Sariel lost the means to respond. She couldn't understand D's objective. Considering the timing, it felt like D was trying to interfere with saving this planet, yet her presentation suggested the opposite. Like her very existence, D's words and deeds couldn't be understood either.

「Oh. I see you are making a face indicating that you do not understand. You are wondering why I am doing all this. It is simple enough. A certain young dragon petitioned me to save you. Out of kindness, I have come to try to grant that wish.」

Given the disclosed circumstances, Sariel again lost the means to respond. When D teased her by saying "It sure is nice to be young eh", it went in one ear and out the other. The only question inside Sariel's head was, "why?". She thought of Gyurie as a friend. However, for Sariel to sacrifice herself to save this

planet was the optimal solution. She couldn't understand why Gyurie would want to overturn that. Sariel entirely failed to understand how others thought of her. Also, she didn't consider her own life to be precious. So long as she could accomplish her mission, she would calmly give up her own life. Consequently, she failed to understand why Gyurie would want to do something uncertain like relying upon such a suspicious god for help.

「Really, you should not be expressing condemnation against that dragon you know. It is precisely because that dragon relied upon me that you will not be dying in vain.」

「Dying in vain?」

She herself wasn't aware of it, but Sariel was quite confused. When she simply parroted D's words, D gave an honest explanation.

「Do you not see that is highly unlikely that the developer of that equipment genuinely intended to pour your energy into the planet?」

Yet again, Sariel felt herself stiffen. In her encounter with D, every time she opened her mouth, Sariel would stiffen. Sariel had heard of Potimas's bad reputation. Even so, everyone from the President on down had taken the maximum precautions, had proceeded carefully, and believed that it would work. Or rather, by making her think that, she failed to be suspicious of Potimas. The truth was flung before her.

「In the first place, such equipment is not capable of decomposing a god. The protective barrier that you unconsciously wrap around yourself will easily prevent that. If you try restraining that unconscious defence and allow yourself to be decomposed of your own free will then it would be a different matter though. Even then, should the decomposition actually succeed and that in addition you are able to avoid that developer's dirty trick, it still would not be able restore the planet. Even if it is all called energy, there are many different kinds. Pouring the energy gained by decomposing a god into a planet, is like doing a blood transfusion without checking the blood type. And furthermore, for a different type of animal. That would never work out. There would obviously be a strong reaction against it. Not even knowing such a thing is why you muscle-brained angels are so troublesome.」

While D jabbers on in rapid succession, the shocking truth is revealed. Sariel's brain freezes completely.

「And so, I have prepared a flawless plan. If you could acknowledge being bound as the nexus for this procedure, although it will take quite some time, it will then be possible to recover the energy for this planet. Will you acknowledge it?」

D held out her hand towards Sariel. There was a magecraft-like constraint activated in the palm of her hand. If Sariel takes that hand, some sort of contract will be established. In her dulled perception, Sariel reached out like clutching at straws. She grasped the hand in acknowledgement.

「The contract is established.」

If she was a devil, she surely would have shown a gloating smile on skillfully making the other party sign the contract. However, D's expression did not change. In spite of the fact that, just now, she had successfully duped this stray angel holding the power of a high ranking god.

Chains of magecraft twine around Sariel's body. Concealed from her, they prevent Sariel's movement, suck out Sariel's power, and finally they overthrow the planet. A single planet comes under the dominion of the laws that D prescribed. By the magecraft known as the System.

Translation notes:

“It sure is nice to be young eh” - In Japanese, this is a phrase typically used by older people to tease the foibles of younger people, particularly with regards to romance.

Past Arc ②5

The world is transformed. Not many people notice the change though. However, those with particularly good intuition had a vague feeling that somehow the world they had known until just a moment ago had changed completely.

『Do you hear me, humans?』

Those who had felt the change, and those who had not - both of them heard the voice coming down from heaven.

『My name is Gyuriedistodiez. There may be some who have noticed this already, but from this moment, the world has changed.』

The man's voice could be heard even if you plugged your ears. Surpassing national borders, even if the language was different, even if they were asleep, no matter what they were doing, whether they consented to it or not, that voice could be heard, and the meaning of the words was etched directly into their heads. It was truly an act of god. A pronouncement from god.

『From now on, this planet is placed under the administration of the System. I hereby announce that I am the administrator.』

Everyone looked up at the heavens, and listened to those words. They instinctively understood that they had to do so no matter what.

『As you know, due to the foolish behaviour of the humans, the life of this planet is going to expire.』

At those words, some humans yelled jeers at the heavens. That they weren't in the wrong. That it was the fault of the dragons. No, it's just those who used MA Energy who were wrong. However, ignoring them, the voice of heaven continued.

『As a countermeasure, Sariel was going to be sacrificed in order to restore the life of this planet. In other words, you attempted to resolve a peril that you had invited yourselves by spending the life of an unrelated person.』

The number of people voicing complaints at the sky became small. The majority of humans were aware that what they had done could only be criticised.

『Don't you agree that it is logical for the sins committed by humans to be atoned for by humans?』

The voice that was coming down from the heavens, almost felt like a death sentence to the listening people.

『Therefore, we have decided to give you humans a chance. The means for doing so is the System that has overthrown this planet.』

While saying it was a chance, it was a punishment game with enforced participation and no right of veto. A game, prepared by god.

『You humans are required to fight. By doing so, the energy in your souls will be able to increase. You are required to become devices that will fight, win and increase their energy. Then, when you die, the energy that you saved up will be collected, then used to revitalise the planet.』

It was like a death sentence in practice. “Fight and die”, in other words.

『However, death is normally the end. Therefore, your circle of reincarnation has been limited to this planet only, within the System. After you die you will someday be born on this planet, and you will be required to fight and earn energy once again.』

“Die and fight again”, in other words.

『Right now, this planet has been saved from collapse due to Sariel's energy. By your own hands, rescue Sariel who you had tried to sacrifice. I am simply doing to you what you tried to do to Sariel. Simple, isn't it?』

What was almost accomplished by sacrificing a god, will be fulfilled by the hands of humans.

『This is your sin, humans. Atone. Atone. Atone. Atone. Atone. Atone. Atone. Atone. Atone. Atone.』

The voice shook with resentment. It couldn't be avoided even by plugging the ears.

『Fight. Fight. Fight. Fight. Fight. Fight. Fight. Fight. Fight. Fight. Then, die.』

The unsolicited voice of heaven ended on that note, and could no longer be heard. Afterwards, the people could only gaze up at the sky in a daze.

「Was that okay?」

「Indeed. It was a good performance.」

Throwing away the script, Gyurie asked that question as if complaining, but D responded in a level tone. With that monotonous response, he couldn't tell if she really thought so. However, from their short association Gyurie had realised that this was typical of D, so he kept his mouth closed as he had nothing particularly important to say.

「Now then, I shall have you become the administrator, to act as a guardian for the normal operation of the System. As I had explained previously, the System is something that makes it so that humans, or rather every living creature within the System, will have the power within their souls enlarged by fighting. Then, that enlarged power will be collected at their time of death, then put to use in revitalising the planet. Then, the souls of the dead will be excluded from the normal cycle of reincarnation, and be born again on this planet. In order to be able to run the System, Sariel has become the nexus for the magecraft. Using Sariel's power, the System was activated and sustained. Also, to delay the collapse of this planet. Sariel will be bound until the planet recovers, but so long as nothing major happens she will not die. Likewise for the planet. It will take some time, but both Sariel and this planet will surely be saved.」

「I see. You have been very helpful. Thank you very much.」

「No no. It is too early to thank me. There are still many things to do in the System. At any rate, this is also the first time that I have put it into operation. Initially, there will probably be many bugs. I shall take appropriate corrective actions for them, but you will also assist.」

「Of course.」

「Consequently, I shall give you authority over several of the System's functions. When you discover something that appears to be a bug, if you can correct it then do so. If you cannot then please report it to me. I intend to verify the operations regularly myself, but since you are on the planet it would probably

be better for you to look over things in person.」

「What specifically should I do?」

「Since I have no way of knowing what kinds of bugs might occur, just keep your eyes open on the planet. If you discover something odd then please check it out immediately. Also, while this is to be expected, the System cannot survive without living creatures. It is fine to make the humans fight, but please take care to regulate them so that they do not go too far and cause total destruction. Since they will not grow if machines are used to fight, it might be better to destroy those sorts of weapons. Going forwards, it would be ideal if firearms disappear. Via the System, it would be possible to make gunpowder unusable to a certain extent though. Even so, such a function should be something that is added once the System is fully running. The initial target is to get it running smoothly.」

「For helping us so much, I really am grateful. Even though she is bound, Sariel can also be saved this way.」

「Indeed she can. Even I cannot save this planet unconditionally. Sariel will survive with the planet, and also the humans will be made to atone for their sins. This is surely the best way.」

Gyurie nods in response to D's words. He believed her words that even someone like D would not be able to save an almost collapsed planet unconditionally.

In truth, D would be able to revitalise the planet without creating the System and using such a roundabout method. However, she would never do that. Because it wouldn't be interesting. Merely for the reason that it wouldn't be interesting otherwise, Sariel will be bound as the System's nexus for many years to come, Gyurie will be put to work while unaware of that, and the planet's inhabitants will be forced to continue to kill each other. Everything, is for D's amusement.

Past Arc ②6

「I can talk with Sariel, right?」

「Yes, of course.」

Because Sariel has become the nexus of the System, she is in another dimension that D had created. It is not possible to enter there without D's permission. Gyurie is no exception to that despite having been granted operational authority over a part of the System. Even then, the authority that Gyurie has been granted is quite limited, so there are far more things he can't do from the point of view of the whole System. D has only required Gyurie to discover bugs, because she doesn't want him to touch the rest of the items as much as possible.

「Well then, I shall send you off.」

「You aren't coming, D?」

「Correct. I do not get along well with angels, so it is better that we do not meet.」

In spite of the fact that they had met not so long ago, D casually said that. Why did she tell such a lie? Because it seemed more interesting this way. D transferred Gyurie into the center of the System where Sariel was, while wondering what kind of conversation the two were about to have.

「Sariel.」

On seeing Sariel's state, Gyurie was shocked to find that D talking of her being bound was not a metaphor at all. It was vast space. An enormous magic circle filled that space. Sariel was at the center of it. She was bound by something that seemed to be chains that spread out in a geometric pattern from the magic circle. Gyurie had expected something looser when he had heard about the binding. At most he had expected something that would prevent her from being able to leave the System nexus in this space. However, reality was much more cruel. Gyurie was dumbfounded seeing her state, thinking that it was almost like she was a prisoner.

「Sariel...」

Dumbfounded, he called her name once again. He wasn't able to come up with anything else to say.

「Gyurie.」

On being called out to, she also responded with the other's name. Her steady eyes capture Gyurie. As always, her eyes have a cold radiance. However, unlike normal, there seems to be a hint of something that seemed like blame reflected within those eyes.

「I'm sorry.」

Gyurie reflexively apologised. As for what he is apologising for, Gyurie himself didn't know. Maybe the attack by the dragons upon the humans. Perhaps that they had run off with all the energy from this planet afterwards. Perhaps that he wasn't able to stop that. Perhaps because he had forced Sariel into such a situation. Or perhaps, all of those.

「It is okay. You are not responsible.」

As if forgiving all those things, Sariel gently nodded.

「Suddenly finding yourself in this situation must have been surprise I guess?」

Even if Sariel forgave him, Gyurie couldn't forgive himself. However, that said, there was little he could do. One of the few things that he could do was to explain the situation to Sariel. That he had relied upon D. That having accepted the request, D had created this System, and as a result of that Sariel had become bound like this. Finally, although it would take a long time, he promised that he would definitely revitalise the planet and take Sariel out from here.

While hearing that explanation, Sariel noticed that Gyurie was mistaken. That since Gyurie thought that Sariel was totally unaware of the situation, then D had carried things out without mentioning to him that they had met. Even though she noticed that, Sariel didn't point out what D had done. She felt that even if she pointed it out there wouldn't be a good outcome. And that was indeed the case. Even if she pointed it out, the conflicts in Gyurie's heart would only grow and D would simply amuse herself with seeing those conflicts.

「I have understood the situation.」

Sariel swallowed her distrust towards D, nodding her head so that it wouldn't be conveyed.

「Gyurie. As you can see, I cannot move.」

Due to the contract with D, Sariel does not have freedom of movement. Taking the role as a battery for the System, she has become something like a mere cogwheel that moves the System. She can barely even intervene in the System.

「Please take care of the planet and the people.」

In place of her who cannot move, she makes that request, bowing her head.

「Of course.」

In response to that, Gyurie answered strongly. However, he wasn't able to immediately respond to Sariel's following words.

「Please. It does not matter if it takes longer to free me. Please guide the people so that they do not fight and so that they do not kill each other.」

That was a request that went against the very nature of the System. Also, it was something virtually impossible for Gyurie to accept.

「Sariel, that is.....」

「I know I am asking for something unreasonable. However, I do not want people to fight any more than this. I said this to the children at the orphanage as well, but I just want people to live peacefully and happily.」

He knew what Sariel wanted to say. Having seen Sariel's actions until now, he had rather expected it. However, Gyurie didn't think he'd be able to do that. Because Gyurie himself had already broadcast the outline of the System from the script that D had written, all the humans in the world were already aware. Also, Gyurie was perfectly aware of just what those people were going to do next. Namely, conflict.

Currently there were two major types of human on this planet. The first was the normal humans. The other, was a new type of human that had evolved based on the usage of MA Energy that Potimas had advocated. While the majority was the former, it would be hard to call the latter scarce. At any rate,

most countries had promoted the usage of MA Energy after all. The normal humans are blaming the evolved humans for having wasted MA Energy and causing the current situation, and are obviously going to attack. All the more so due to the System being put into operation, which endorses fighting.

「Please, let them live. Keep them alive. Do not kill them. Do not allow them to be killed. I beg you.」

「.....I shall do my best.」

That was all that Gyurie could reply with.

『It is almost time.』

D called out almost as if she was waiting for an opportune moment, which was in fact the case.

「I got it. Well then Sariel, I shall come again. Without fail, I shall save you.」

「Yes. I will be waiting.」

Then, Gyurie left the place. Not knowing that he would never be able to set foot in there again.

「Such a wonderfully benevolent heart.」

On Gyurie's return, D said that in an even voice as a greeting. From that tone, it wasn't possible to determine whether or not she truly did think that it was wonderful.

「Indeed.」

While having the same opinion, Gyurie had decided that just this one time he couldn't do as Sariel asked. To be fair, most people had simply gotten dragged into the situation. Ignorance might be a sin, but it wasn't something that could never be forgiven. However, there was at least one person who could never be forgiven. Potimas Hyphenath. The main cause of this situation was due to him guiding this planet towards collapse, even if it was indirect. Even if everyone else could be forgiven, that man absolutely could not be forgiven. Precisely because Sariel had predicted that Gyurie would take such action is probably why she said "Do not kill", but that was something he could not accept. He would kill Potimas. Not a fragment of his soul would remain.

「As administrators, we should follow the example of that benevolent heart, and commit to not taking action against the living creatures on this planet.」

However, Gyurie's intent, was stopped by the high ranking administrator.

「Eh?」

At first, Gyurie did not understand what D was saying. As such, he accidentally voiced his doubt in a dumb sounding way.

「To repeat, I said that as administrators we should cease from taking action against the living creatures on this planet. In the first place, the System is a device that encourages the mutual development of the living creatures on this place, then collecting the energy generated from doing so. If we interfere excessively, we shall deviate from that objective.」

「Yes, but...」

What D was saying was a sound argument. However, Gyurie had someone that he had to kill. He couldn't agree to this.

「What we administrators do, is monitoring and adjustment. Is that not very much like what gods should do? Therefore, you must not try to kill any specific person. Sariel also wishes for that, right?」

While referring to Sariel, D issued coercive instructions.

「You simply have to follow what I say. If you go off on your own, I will not be responsible for what happens, okay?」

While that was phrased in a vague way, it could be predicted that it would not be anything nice. Gyurie had the misapprehension that his body was somehow bound by invisible chains. It wasn't only Sariel who was bound. From this moment, Gyurie harboured a faint yet very real doubt against D.

「Now then, please entertain me.」

An endless darkness was invoked by that even voice without even a fragment of emotion.

Past Reflections: Ariel

What was the System like immediately after it was put into operation? What's the point in asking about that?It's not something pleasant to talk about you know? You still want to know? Hmm. Okay, just for a bit then.

Well, to describe how things were back then in a word, it was brutal. Simply that. Brutally brutal. Apparently, it was like hell all over the place. I was completely at my limit dealing with my own troubles, so I only heard about other places from rumours. But, well, I'm sure you could imagine it.

Firstly, the countries that produced most of their energy from MA Energy were in a hopeless state. Naturally, right? Just imagine what modern Japan would be like if electricity completely vanished. Then maybe include gasoline in that too. Basically that means all the usable energy is gone, right. Because those had been relied upon, it's obvious that living standards would collapse.

In addition, because of the attacks from the dragons back then, everything had been totally wrecked. Not only had many people become refugees, the fact that it wasn't possible to use energy on top of that was a double-punch. Reconstruction wasn't remotely feasible. People were at their limit just surviving each day.

What was most painful for me, was food. It was a situation where it was hard just getting food each day, yet due to my constitution I had to consume much more than other people. My friends gave me priority with food distribution because of that, but it still wasn't enough. Kids even younger than me would endure their own empty stomachs and hand their food to me. I felt so pathetic, so guilty, that I had wanted to die. Or rather, I seriously thought that several times. But, each time everyone else stopped me, saying "Sariel-sama said it, didn't she. Please live". I ate while crying. But it still wasn't enough, and I still can't forget the taste of the dirt I ate in order to deceive my hunger.

Somehow I managed to survive those times, but before long fights started to break out. The cause, was due to the System, or I guess more because there was a scramble for the few remaining resources. Like I just said, there was a

serious shortage of food, right. In the scramble for that people started killing each other in various places, and basically that slowly escalated. If they had that much energy, shouldn't they have just cooperated to break free of the situation they were in? But well, humans give priority to the present over the future, right. Anyway, they couldn't think of anything else except to scramble for what existed now.

My friends and I in the orphanage, continued to take refuge and avoid those fights. However, there were times when no matter what we did we still got dragged into it. In those days I was just a burden, and didn't have the slightest ability to fight. Immediately after the System was put into operation it seems there was already benefits given by the status values, but that depended upon your original abilities in the first place. As I was spending more than half the day in bed, the benefits of the status values were less than that of a normal person. There was nothing I could do.

But you know, there was one day when a really helpless situation occurred. On that day, Gob-gob went off to try to fight some men for the first time. We were the survivors of Potimas's human experiments. However, just because we survived that didn't necessarily mean that we could continue to live. Gob-gob only had a lifespan of several years. It should have been research to try to prolong life, but he was a kid born with green skin and a lifespan much shorter than normal humans. Well, he had obviously been treated like a failure.

「I won't live much longer anyway.」

Saying that, he went off. So anyway, I gave him my favourite pressed flower bookmark, and told him this beforehand.

「That's my favourite, so be sure to return it.」

In the end, after showing a vague smile, he never returned. He had always been a coward you know. But right at the very end he tried to be cool. He was an idiot, right..... Yeah, an idiot.

From then on us lot wandered around every which way to escape the ravages of war, but somehow the situation turned from fights scrambling over food, to a conflict between humans and evolved humans. We were simply at the mercy of events, so I don't know the details about how the situation transitioned into

such a conflict. However, before I knew it, it had developed into a situation where humans were attacking evolved humans. The evolved humans, called demons nowadays, had far better physical abilities than normal humans in the first place, and their status values were correspondingly superior. However, they were a small minority, and because at first the evolved humans didn't team up, they were attacked one-sidedly.

You're asking about the food problems? Well, it's true that the population was reduced as they killed each other in a scramble for food so the amount of food required was also reduced correspondingly, but the main reason the situation improved was because of an outbreak of monsters.

You're asking why there were monsters? Well, just listen. These days monsters increase their numbers by breeding, but in those initial days they would spring forth out of nowhere. I'd guess it was something that D had prepared. So, normally that would cause chaos, and sure enough there was chaos. However, by the time of the first monster outbreak, people had already started to master the blessings given by status values and skills you see. As a result, the monsters weren't that much of a threat. The monsters back then were like prototypes, so they weren't that strong anyway either. When monsters came attacking it was easy enough to kill them in return. In those days, it was the other humans who were scarier.

So, we have these monsters that were easy to kill. Not surprisingly, they were a source of meat. Well, you understand the rest, right? In those days, people would eat whatever they could, even if it was something strange. Ironically enough, the demons weren't even a threat, and in fact they became a source of aid. Well, because their arrival created some leeway in resources, I'm sure that's exactly what led to the movement to suppress the demons.

The cornered demons were driven into the north of the Kasanagara continent, where they formed a group and counterattacked. The rest follows what you already know, that's how the history of a long war between the humans and demons began in that boundary region. Well, it did take a number of years to develop that far of course. Or rather, until it stabilised the wars there were a really bad quagmire.

I might have briefly mentioned this before, but the first Demon King was a

vampire. He was called a terrifying Demon King, but the guy himself wasn't actually that strong though, but by using the vampire's traits of being sly and increasing their followers he struck out at the people. Apparently, it was with such momentum that it seemed like everyone living would be killed. If the demons and the humans could have banded together then history would have been different, but unfortunately the result was the current 3-way struggle. Or rather, can the current situation even be called a 3-way struggle? The current situation is one where you can't tell your friends from your enemies after all.

Even with my friends from the orphanage, in the end we all went our separate ways. There was a faction that believed in saving the people according to Sariel-sama's teachings. There was a faction that believed that it would be better to fight in order to save Sariel-sama as soon as possible. I've said this many times, but us orphans were survivors from Potimas's human experiments. While there were complete failures like me and Gob-gob, there were also those who had both failed parts and successful parts. Those with superior physical abilities, those with special abilities, and so on. Combine that with skills and status values and they were able to demonstrate far greater abilities than normal humans. As we children fled here and there over the months and years, we grew into adults.

Eh? What do you mean I haven't grown? Ha ha ha. Haven't I grown up magnificently! Ha ha ha ha ha.

Ahem!

Returning to the topic, us orphans split right in half, and set out on our own. Did you know? The first Hero and the first Saint came from our orphanage, right? Well anyway, they all either died fighting or lived out their lives and there's none remaining. Most of them sacrificed themselves just before they died. Refusing to reincarnate, they sacrificed their own souls and all their energy to the System. They all vanished like that. All of them. They were idiots, right..... Yeah, idiots.

That's why I've gotten used to being left behind. Well, unlike them I couldn't fight at all. It took all I had just to stay alive you know. While I was lying in bed, everyone else was lost. Just why was it that someone useless like me remained in the end? On top of that, I don't know why, but I became forever young.

Maybe it was the influence of the System, or otherwise Potimas's research must have quietly born fruit. Or maybe it was both of them? While I don't know the truth, the fact is I haven't aged since the System was first put into operation. That's why I'm still alive. On top of that, after many years of suffering I succeeded in overcoming my weak constitution due to my status values and skills. With the Gluttony Skill I could eat as much as I wanted of whatever I wanted to, and also the System decomposed the poison inside my body. Over the long months and years my status values accumulated bit by bit, to that of an average person, then higher, then higher and higher still. And that's how I became like this.

I'm sure it must have been truly mortifying for Potimas that he had thrown me away, when in fact I had accomplished his goal of eternal youth. I'm sure he thought "If only I had never thrown her away!" or something. All I can say is, serves you right!

Eh? What was Potimas doing immediately after the System was put into operation? Who knows? He completely vanished from the world stage for a while anyway. I guess you could say he went into hiding? Just when I thought he had finally become quiet, before I knew it the new species called "elves" had suddenly infiltrated all of society. Literally, before I knew it. That guy's skill really is superior when it comes to such things.

Well, it's a bit rough, but that's about how things were immediately after the System was put into operation. Well? It wasn't a nice story, right?

Translation notes:

"I gave him my favourite pressed flower bookmark" - probably a reference to Oni 2 where goblins hold pressed flowers as a good luck charm and pray to the Goddess.

"I might have briefly mentioned this before, but the first Demon King was a vampire" - probably a reference to Blood 23.

"Refusing to reincarnate, they sacrificed their own souls and all their energy to the System" - this was also mentioned in The Demon King and the Pope

Past Reflections: Gyurie

Do I have regrets? I have an endless amount. If only I had done this here, or that there. Once I start thinking about them it goes on forever. Particularly in my case, as I had more choices. No, maybe it would be better to say that I didn't have any choices. If I could have made a choice, surely the future would have been different. When I think about that, my thoughts always get lost in a quagmire.

However, in the end, even if I ponder such things, I can't change the past. That being the case, there's nothing I can do but to accept the choices I made. It's not to Dustin's extent, but I must take responsibility for my past actions. But well, precisely because of that, I've still not made any choices though.

Whether it's Dustin or myself, our past choices have bound us and even now they are narrowing our freedom to choose. Dustin is single-mindedly continuing to walk down the path he chose in the past. No matter how thorny that path might be, no matter how much it exhausts his heart, he won't stop walking. Also, considering that he has not gone off track from that path even once, he is dreadful. In terms of force of will, that man exceeds me by far. He might not be a god, but on that point he's a monster that could even beat a god.

My choices? I have not made choices. I couldn't make any choices. Year in year out I take half-baked measures, and no matter what I do it doesn't change anything. Not being able to do anything I sit idly by, and even now I'm still not doing anything after all. The only thing I can actually say that I accomplished, was to go beg D for mercy. It's so pathetic that I can't stand it. Even then, I'm in the predicament of not being able to judge whether begging D for mercy was correct. I can't help think that there must have been another way.

Even I realise that D didn't help us out of good intentions. Or rather, I didn't realise that at the time. After a long time I began to think that she was suspicious, and I became convinced at the point when I was no longer able to contact her. I realised rather too late, didn't I.

I don't know what D's objective might be either. According to her it was

because it seems interesting, and I am sure she truly feels that way, but I think that she might have other objectives apart from that. One of them, is probably some sort of experiment. I have heard about a thing called “kodoku” on Earth. This is the same. The System is an enormous “kodoku”. It is a device to make all living beings kill each other, in order to create even stronger beings. The final target would be, to create a god. Since the skills of the Seven Deadly Sins and Seven Virtues have “reaching the gods” in the explanatory note, that point is obvious. The System is probably an experimental device designed to artificially create a god.

As for what’s the meaning of doing so, I have no idea either. Maybe it’s simply that interesting for her. Apart from that, I’ve spotted all sorts of specifications in the System that could be thought of as D’s playfulness. I am not able to come up with a rational explanation for all of them. I’m sure I wouldn’t understand them unless I asked D. But then again, even if I asked about them maybe I still wouldn’t understand. That’s just how she is. Gaining understanding would actually be my loss.

Yes, she was hard to understand. I had absolutely no idea what would stir D’s heartstrings. Even now I don’t know. If I take arbitrary actions, I might get on D’s bad side. Due to thinking so, I couldn’t do anything except to quietly do as I was told. Even here I have abandoned the right to choose. Or perhaps, considering D’s personality, if I could have just gotten her to think that it was interesting, maybe I would have been able to have a greater freedom of action to a certain extent. However, this is me we’re talking about, okay? Do you seriously think that someone like me can make someone like D think that something is interesting? Although I’m saying so myself, I don’t think that I can. When I consider that I might ruin everything, I lose the courage to take a single step forwards. Because of that, even while D toyed with this planet, I couldn’t do anything and simply did nothing.

That being said, even though she toyed with this planet, it is still the truth that it was saved by her. Considering the current situation, while I might have worried about whether what I was doing was correct or not back then, it’s certainly the case that I had no other way and that this was the best option. Indeed, even if I could return back to that moment, I would likely still rely upon

D. Hmm, when I think that, at the end of the day maybe this is the only future I could have selected. No matter how much I worry about this and that, it's all too easy to picture myself losing the timing to make a choice due to my worrying. So I accept being called a "loser".

Sigh. Ahh, that's right. I'm always just going round in circles. I guess I have what's called a washed-up nature. I'm no different to the masses. I'm simply an existence that obeys the main course of events in the world, just going with the flow. If there exists those who are called heroes or protagonists, who go against that flow, who enforce their own will, who change the way the world is, then when all's said and done I would be called a minor character who adds some flavour to the story. However, although I can't change the course of events, I still have power. Therefore, I'm not even able to be a proper minor character, and instead I'm a half-baked existence loitering on the edge of the stage. Any way you cut it I'm half-baked aren't I.

However, half-baked I might be, minor character I might be, I am here as myself. I might not have made choices before, but that doesn't mean I'll never make choices. I might be only going with the flow, but I'm still flowing downstream. I might be D's errand runner, but unlike the System I wasn't created by her. I am here with my own will. I want you to remember that.

.....Well, considering that we're drinking here, maybe you won't remember anything no matter what I say though. I still have plenty to drink. Hang out with me a bit longer, I still have some complaints.

Character Introduction 2

Author's warning: There are spoilers. In addition, there is also behind the scenes information that has little to do with the main story.

The Reincarnators

A classroom in Heishin High School was destroyed by a mysterious explosion. The students and teacher of that class are then reincarnated into another world.

Shiraori 白織 — nameless 名前なし

The protagonist, referred to as Shiro within the story and Kumoko outside the story, but almost never called by her real name. It couldn't be helped that her name didn't come out for such a long time. She is the irregular who climbed up from the weakest class of spider monster by using fighting spirit and determination to ascend all the way to godhood. While she is a reincarnator, unlike the other reincarnators she was not originally human. In fact she is a real spider used as a substitute for D (in the guise of Wakaba Hiroyuki 若葉姫色), with her memories transplanted. She knows the secret of her own birth, knows the truth about the world and is currently busy with various activities. Overall she is the Tertiary Perpetrator. For the troubles in modern era, she is the Primary Perpetrator. Is that really okay, protagonist?

Translation note: "Perpetrator" - in the sense of causing things to happen. Potimas is the overall Primary Perpetrator and D the Secondary. In other words, most of the world's problems are due to Potimas, or if not him then D, or if not her then Shiro.

Sophia ソフィア — Negishi Shouko 根岸彰子

Daughter of the lord of the Keren territory in the country of Sariera. Born as a vampire true ancestor. Having been dragged into the war between the Goddess Religion and the Divine Word Religion, she lost her parents and was about to be killed by Potimas when she was picked up by Shiro and the Demon King.

Afterwards, she grew up magnificently while on a trip referred to as the spider-style training camp. She grew up so magnificently it's likely her dead parents looking on would probably turn over in their grave and faint. She takes part in various activities as a member of the Demon King Army working under Shiro. Due to her appearance before reincarnating she spent the springtime of her life being bullied and isolated. Due to that her personality became somewhat twisted. On discovering she had a beautiful appearance after being reborn she was like "my time has come!" but what actually awaited her was a turbulent era.

Wrath ラース — Sasajima Kyouya 笹島京也

Born as a goblin in a corner of the Magic Mountain Range that separates the human and demon territories. He lived a humble life as a goblin, but his village was attacked by a contingent of humans lead by the summoner Buirims. Nearly all the goblins in the village were killed, and he himself was enslaved by Buirims and forced to be a subordinate. Due to the feelings of anger from that time he acquired the Wrath skill. After he dominated Buirims in turn, he rampaged around due to the Wrath skill. After he evolved into a Kijin he fought with Sophia, and regained his sense of reason as a side-effect, and has been working as a member of the Demon King Army since then. In his previous life he was one of Shun's close friends, and possessed a sense of justice that hated anything not fair and aboveboard.

Shun シュン — Yamada Shunsuke 山田俊輔

The 5th Prince of the Anareich Kingdom. Inheriting the dying wish of the then Hero Julius, his elder brother who was born to the same mother, he became the Hero. But, due to the schemes of a certain spider he is an unfortunate person who was framed for a crime, forced to fight and so on. Even so, after he pressed on without getting depressed he had Taboo installed. What will Yamada's future be!? Before he reincarnated he gave off the feeling of an average person who didn't stand out. His one redeeming feature is in games, and due to skipping his studies to focus on spending the springtime of his life playing games he became a bit of a loser. Putting it another way though, being able to be average despite playing games all the time, you could say that his hidden specs are high. On reincarnating those hidden specs exploded massively. But while they did, all sorts of misfortune came his way due to a certain spider.

Katia カティア — Ooshima Kanata 大島叶多

The noble daughter of a duke in the Anareich Kingdom. She was originally male but is now female. She is working hard in order to support Shun, a close friend since her previous life. While working hard she became attracted to Shun, and on the occasion of the coup d'état in the Kingdom she turned completely serious. She was originally male yet is now like a carnivorous female with her eyes on the prize. In his previous life, because he was pushed around by his two carnivorous elder sisters, he gained a distrust of women. However, he also had a girlish side that embraces the illusion known as love. As a result, this gender-bent carnivorous female burst out. Just why did this happen? What will Yamada's future be!?

Firimes ファイリメス — Okazaki Kanami 岡崎香奈美

Born as the daughter of the elf patriarch in the Elf Forest. Like the protagonist, she is more likely to be referred to as “sensei” than by her real name. She was the only adult amongst the reincarnators, and was the classroom teacher. She is considered to be the daughter of Potimas, but in fact she was a high spec elf at birth due to the adjustments that Potimas made. She is more or less the daughter of one of Potimas's clones. She is a pitiful person who was manipulated by the “Student List” skill granted to her due to a certain Evil God thinking that this would make things more interesting, and was further put to good use for Potimas's ends. Having a strong sense of duty from being a teacher she did her best to go around taking her students into protection, but the end result was the opposite. As she herself has said, she believes that she wouldn't be able to properly interact with her pupils if she didn't develop a persona, and she is a timid person to the degree that if she hadn't had the sense of duty of what an ideal teacher should be like she wouldn't have been able to accept the reality of the different world she had reincarnated into. In a sense, she is the number one victim amongst the reincarnators, and also the number one aggressor.

Yuugo ユーゴ — Natsume Kengo 夏目健吾

The prince of the Rengzand Empire. He became warped due to not having anyone around him who understood his circumstances, not having anyone he could trust due to the troublesome political situation inside the Empire, and not having had any dissatisfaction about how he had lived his previous life. Then he

was used by a certain spider. Persistently aiming for Shun, he became the criminal who threw the world into a maelstrom of chaos. In his previous life, he was hated by many due to being the type who was somewhat egotistic and would also not hide his true thoughts, but his frank attitude attracted even more people. Although Shun was indiscriminately hated by him due to them not being able to get along, he was a nice enough guy to be the leader of the boys. If he had been able to enter university, work in part-time jobs and enter society as an adult, he would likely have experienced a smooth and successful life. At the time when he first met Shun after reincarnating, if he hadn't tried to avoid Shun due to being aware that they didn't get along in their previous lives, and if his hard to understand SOS had been noticed, perhaps the end result could also have been different.

Translation note: “and if his hard to understand SOS had been noticed” - putting it another way, Yuugo was mentally distressed but couldn't bring himself to admit it and nobody spotted the tell-tale signs due to his attitude.

Yuri ユーリ — Hasebe Yuika 長谷部結花

An orphan from the Holy Country of Aleius. She was abandoned in front of a church. Having partial awareness of the incident due to being a reincarnator, she remembers the moment when she was abandoned, and that became a trauma for her. Perhaps in order to overcome that trauma, she completely devoted herself to the doctrine of the Divine Word Religion, and before she noticed she had become a candidate for the next Saint. In her previous life she was a completely normal highschool student. She enjoyed a bittersweet springtime of her life, such as having a small secret crush on the likewise completely normal boy in the seat next to her, so what did she do wrong to end up reincarnated into another world? On finding that the boy she had had a crush on in her previous life had become a prince she was in high spirits, but it was short lived and she experienced things like being turned into a pawn due to Yuugo's brainwashing, being trod on and being kicked. In both the web edition and the published edition she had little presence, and amongst the reincarnators who weren't confined in the elf village she is probably the most unfortunate.

Fey フェイ — Shinohara Mirei 漆原美麗

Her name only appears in the published edition. In the web edition she is simply amongst those confined in the elf village. Her confession to the senpai that she liked was rejected because he liked Wakaba Hiroyuki, so out of resentment she led the bullying of Wakaba Hiroyuki. Those around Wakaba Hiroyuki (ie D) could somewhat perceive how dangerous she was, and they tried to stop Mirei's actions. She is a regular member of the Sseries in the published edition.

Kunihiko クニヒコ — Tagawa Kunihiko 田川邦彦

Born in a village on the border between the humans and demons that took bandit-like actions against the demons. In order to defeat Merazofis, the leader of the demons that destroyed that village, he became an adventurer and gained fame. While he accomplished his heart's desire of fighting against Merazofis in the Human-Demon Great War, he was unable to overturn the overwhelming difference in strength, and withdrew. He keenly felt his own lack of ability. Afterwards he went to the elf village, and got dragged into the war between the elves and the Demon King Army. In his past life, apart from maintaining his delicate but inseparable relationship with his childhood friend, he was a completely normal highschool boy. Being stuck with that inseparable relationship with his childhood friend after reincarnating, is some kind of fate.

Asaka アサカ — Kushitani Asaka 櫛谷麻香

Born in a village on the border between the humans and demons that took bandit-like actions against the demons. In short, the same village as Kunihiko. Due to her appreciating reliable and realistic things, she took on the stopper role against Kunihiko's idiotic tendencies. She became an adventurer together with Kunihiko and gained fame. While she truly wants to live peacefully and without fighting, she took up arms for Kunihiko's sake. According to Kunihiko, "If Asaka wasn't around I wouldn't be able to survive". Go explode forever you bastards. She has been in an inseparable relationship with her childhood friend Kunihiko since her past life.

Translation note: "Go explode forever you bastards" - a reference to the "normies, go explode" meme.

Sajin サジン — Kusama Shinobu 草間忍

Born to a family that serves in the dark ops of Holy Country of Aleius. Due to that connection, the pope noticed that he had a strange skill shortly after birth,

and he became the trigger for the existence of the reincarnators being known about. After his birth, he participated in the dark ops training, distinguishing himself due to the influence of the unique Ninja skill he was born with. But, because he had an easygoing nature from the start he is fatally ill-suited to the dark ops - a regrettable ninja. In his previous life he was treated like a gofer due to his easygoing nature. Even now he's acting like the pope's gofer, so there's not much difference.

Ogi オギ — Ogiwara Ken'ichi 荻原健

Born in the Holy Country of Aleius. Because he had a unique skill that was a more advanced version of telepathy, he became a stooge for the pope, sent into the elf village as a spy. His task is to report on the livelihoods of the reincarnators in the elf village. At the time of the attack on the elf village, he failed in his attempt to poison them and keep the other reincarnators pinned down and out of the battle. He was beaten up by Asaka. In his previous life he was a member of the soccer club and had a wide circle of friends.

? — Kudou Sachi 工藤沙智

One of the reincarnators held captive in the elf village. The former class-rep. She was bought with money by the elves as a baby, and has lived there the whole time since. Because of those circumstances she often hits out severely at sensei. Since she was previously the class-rep, she is like the leader of the reincarnators in the elf village. In her previous life she was a closet fujoshi. Because the elf village was lacking in entertainment, she came out of the closet about that fact to the other girls. Due to her activities to preach the rotten faith, all the girls in the elf village became fujoshi.

Translation note: "Fujoshi" - literally "rotten woman", ie a woman who enjoys reading about love between men, or shipping them.

? — Sakurazaki Issei 桜崎一成

Deceased. A close friend of Natsume who understood him well. After reincarnating, he was killed by Potimas who realised the danger of his unique skill. Having been reincarnated in the Rengzand Empire like Natsume, he would likely have met with Natsume again after growing up due to the social standing of his parents. In fact, he had the highest specs of all the reincarnators, surpassing Shun, and his unique skill was very strong. That backfired upon him

and he was killed off.

? — Kogure Naofumi 小暮直史

Deceased. Unfortunately the village he was born in was attacked by monsters and he passed away. A crybaby who would burst into tears over every little thing. He also cried when he was put in charge of the classroom pet.

? — Hayashi Kouta 林康太

Deceased. Unfortunately had an accident and died. A former member of the table tennis club who became a different person when holding a racket. Normally he was a quiet boy who didn't stand out.

? — Aikawa Ren 相川恋

Her name only appears in the published edition. One of the reincarnators held captive in the elf village. Contrary to her name, her combined age in her past life and this life equals her time spent without a boyfriend.

Translation note: Ren (恋) means “love”.

? — Tsushima Masaru 津島勝

His name only appears in the published edition. One of the reincarnators held captive in the elf village. A member who receives supplies from the elves. While doing so, he worries about why the girls have intense expressions when he is seen talking with elf males.

? — Maki Shuuto 槇将羽登

His name only appears in the published edition. One of the reincarnators held captive in the elf village. Despite having the name “Shuuto”, he was a former member of the baseball club. Because there is a high percentage of girls in the elf village, he feels uneasy.

Translation note: “Shuuto” sounds just like “shoot” in Japanese, which would frequently be used in soccer.

? — Iijima Aiko 飯島愛子

Her name only appears in the published edition. One of the reincarnators held captive in the elf village. In her previous life she was a flamboyant high school girl, but in this life she has converted into a fujoshi.....

? — Segawa Touko 瀬川柊子

Her name only appears in the published edition. One of the reincarnators held captive in the elf village. In her previous life she was a girl besotted with pure love shoujo manga, but in this life she has become a fujoshi who has indecent delusions about relationships between boys.....

? — Temari Kawasaki 手鞠川咲

Her name only appears in the published edition. One of the reincarnators held captive in the elf village. She is in fact Buirims's daughter. Has likewise converted to a rotten path.....

? — Tonooka Kumiko 外岡久美子

Her name only appears in the published edition. One of the reincarnators held captive in the elf village. An extremist who is scheming to somehow have the elf males make a move on Tsushima.

? — Nanase Chie 七瀬千恵

Her name only appears in the published edition. One of the reincarnators held captive in the elf village. Couldn't care less about converting to the rotten path. Or at least, that's what she thought long ago. Before she realised it she was stuck in the swamp. The rotten path is fearsome.

? — Furuta Mio 古田未央

Her name only appears in the published edition. One of the reincarnators held captive in the elf village. Secretly in love with Maki. But, she also puts that aside for her erotic rotten delusions.

The Demon King's side

The army of demons with the Demon King being the leading figure.

Ariel アリエル

The current Demon King and the oldest Divine Beast in the world. A living witness to the history of the world from before the System was put into operation. She decided to become the Demon King due to the incident that caused the reincarnators to be reincarnated into this world which also caused the amount of MA Energy to precipitously decline, and also because she felt that her life span nearing its end. In order to save her foster parent Sariel, she

fulfilled her duty as the Demon King, and defeated Potimas. Originally she was one of the victims of Potimas's human experiments and was treated as a failed product. Considering that she was created as a chimera using Potimas's genes, it could be said that she is a daughter of Potimas. Due to being a failed product, she suffered for a long time from defects in her body, but because of the System's power she gradually got better. Starting from there and over the span of many years, she attained the greatest strength in the entire world. In order to defeat Potimas she used up almost all of that power though, and now all she can do is to live out what little remains of her life.

Merazofis メラゾフィス

The commander of the 4th Demon King Army. Originally he was the right-hand man and valet of the lord of the Keren territory in the country of Sariera. Having been caught up in the conflict between the Divine Word Religion and the Goddess Religion, he became a vampire due to Sophia when she was almost about to be killed by Potimas. Since then he has worked under the Demon King together with Sophia, and after distinguishing himself in the Demon King Army he rose up to become an army commander. While he has the rank of an army commander, he gives maximum priority to his ojou-sama in Sophia. Having sworn an oath of allegiance to the now deceased lord and lady and having inherited their dying wish, he puts in great efforts every day in order to become a man who can protect Sophia.

Balto バルト

The right-hand man of the Demon King. The person who in practice is keeping the demons all in one piece. A wordly-wise man. At the time when he was putting strenuous efforts into trying to do something about the demons who were declining in various ways such as population decrease, Ariel was inaugurated as the Demon King, and with her proposal that "we shall invade the human territories" he was driven into an even greater dilemma, turning him into a pitiful person who has constant stomach pains. He works so hard that Shiro fears he might die from overwork. Do your best.

Argnar アーグナー

The commander of the 1st Demon King Army. Deceased. A veteran demon who put in strenuous efforts to save the demons though in a different way to Balto.

However, he was marked by a certain spider, and although he did as he was told and was undoubtedly one of the most capable demons around, in the end it seemed like he was discarded and was crushed by a Queen Taratekt.

Sanatoria サーナトリア

The commander of the 2nd Demon King Army. A voluptuous woman who is a childhood friend of Balto. From a household of succubi who use their good looks and techniques to manipulate others to do their will. Distrusting the current Demon King Ariel, she comes up with various schemes hoping to catch Ariel off guard. However, she is not aware of the fact that Ariel overheard all of them and that Balto has been covering for her.

Kogou コゴウ

The commander of the 3rd Demon King Army. Having a personality that dislikes conflict, he feels that he doesn't particularly want to obey Ariel who is proactively seeking war. Egged on by Sanatoria, they are attempting to see if they can cause a revolt.

Darado ダラド

The commander of the 5th Demon King Army. Due to being born and raised in a family that swears by absolute allegiance to the generations of Demon Kings, he will abide by any plan that the Demon King comes up with. For that reason, he repeatedly clashes with the other army commanders who distrust the Demon King, causing a volatile atmosphere.

Hyuui ヒュウイ

The commander of the 6th Demon King Army. Deceased. A youthful army commander who wields magic. Fearing Ariel from the bottom of his heart, he made a mistake about when to retreat, and was defeated by the mage unit of the Empire lead by Ronant. His death came when Ronant's magic shot through his head.

Blow ブロウ

The commander of the 7th Demon King Army. Deceased. Balto's younger brother. Due to being raised while admiring his elder brother Balto from behind, he couldn't accept that Ariel had suddenly been inaugurated as the Demon King, and strongly opposed the plans that would drive the demons into a predicament. His last moments came when he fought with the Hero Julius.

one-on-one and lost.

Felmina フェルミナ

Originally an ojou-sama from a good family. After taking action in order to try to remove Sophia who was doing whatever she likes in the demon academy, she was condemned by Sophia's followers. After losing her social position she was picked up by a certain spider and reforged, and appointed as a subordinate. Due to that sequence of events she hates Sophia. While she is grateful towards Shiro she is unable to honestly respect her considering the current situation of the demons. Due to having an incomplete understanding of the current situation, she is similar to Balto in having stomach pains every day. She is capable but tends not to stand out much.

Waldo ワルド

Felmina's ex-fiance. The son of a good family. A brave man who was strongly attracted to Sophia and as a result of pledging allegiance to her, he was allowed to become a vampire. Love is blind. Despite already having a fiancée in Felmina he threw her away, and was prepared to throw away his own position and everything in order to win over Sophia. Currently he, Sophia and Felmina are all working under Shiro. Somehow this love-triangle is like a minor scene of carnage.

Jigris ジグリス

An ex-follower of Sophia. A teacher at the demon academy. After breaking away from Sophia's charm, it seems he's reflecting upon his actions.

Kara カラー

An ex-follower of Sophia. Something like a rival to Waldo.

Nitara ニタラ

An ex-follower of Sophia. The younger brother of army commander Hyuui. After his elder brother died in the war and having broken away from Sophia's charm, the shock was so great that he has become a shut-in.

Shivy シヴィ

An ex-follower of Sophia. Having broken away from Sophia's charm but having not lost his admiration for her strength, he took a calculated risk to follow Sophia in joining Shiro's army.

Warkis ワーキス

The ex-commander of the 7th Demon King Army. Deceased. Judging that there was not enough resources for the demons to fight the humans, he planned a coup d'état to topple the Demon King. Shiro picked up on his actions beforehand, and the uprising was suppressed before it started due to Blow.

Ael アエル

A type of monster that is called a Puppet Taratek and are Ariel's subordinates. She was placed in the headquarters of the Divine Word Religion for communication with the pope. In the published edition, her siblings Sael, Riel and Fiel appear.

Queen Taratekt (Mother) クイーンタラテクト・マザー

A gigantic spider monster from the Elro Great Labyrinth. The real mother of Shiro in her current life. When she tried to use the skill called Kin Domination on Shiro, her mind was devoured in return instead.

Queen Taratekt (Elf Forest) クイーンタラテクト・エルフの森

The Queen Taratekt that was in the Elf Forest. She prowled around the elf village, as a restraint on Potimas. During the elf village battle she was beaten by one of Potimas's weapons.

Anareich Kingdom

The people of the Anareich Kingdom.

The King of Anareich アナレイト国王

His real name is Sirius. His name appears in the published edition's chronology. Deceased. The father of Shun and Julius and the king of the Kingdom of Anareich. He was neither a foolish king nor a great king but an ordinary king, for better or worse. He cherished his family, treasuring his children and wives. During normal times he would likely have been able to rule safely, but due to the schemes of a certain spider he had the pitiful last moments of being murdered by his own daughter.

Cyris サイリス

The First Prince of the Anareich Kingdom. The eldest son of the queen and thus

first in line to the throne. If nothing unusual had happened he would have become the king, but Julius who was the child of a concubine became the Hero, and Julius's younger brother became the next Hero, so due to his impatience with his other siblings gaining in fame, his personality gradually became twisted. Having inherited the ordinary qualities of his father, his reputation was entirely one of being neither good nor bad. Due to participating in the scheme of a certain spider he staged a coup d'état.

Leston レストン

The Third Prince of the Anareich Kingdom. A prince born to a different concubine than Julius and Shun. Abandoning his duties as a prince and behaving wildly was a pretence he faked in order to appeal to others that he had no interest in the throne. He made use of the spare time that gave him to sympathise with the true world peace that the elves touted. While he had once lost his life during the coup d'état staged by Cyris, he was resurrected by Shun.

Raylecia レイレシア

The First Princess of the Anareich Kingdom. The elder sister of Julius and Shun, born to a different concubine. She is currently married in a foreign country. Her name appears in the published edition's chronology

Sue スー

The Second Princess of the Anareich Kingdom. Born to the queen, like Cyris. Her real name is Suelecia. Since she and Shun were born at almost exactly the same time, they were brought up together. While doing so, she got up to all sorts of tricks with Shun, and as a result of unconsciously idolising him as an older brother, her feelings towards Shun eventually crossed the line between an older brother and younger sister. As a result of having the raw talent to even rival the reincarnators, she came to be considerably hated by her true elder brother Cyris. Her talent got her marked out by a certain spider, and she was used. Having now being released from various things, the yandere younger sister has been unleashed. What will Yamada's future be!?

The Queen 王妃

The mother of Cyris and Sue. Being obsessed with political power, she made plans to place her own son Cyris on the throne. There are plausible rumours circulating that the mother of Julius and Shun might have been assassinated on

the orders of this queen.

The Third Princess Consort 第三側妃

The mother of Julius and Shun. Died shortly after Shun was born.

The First and Second Princess Consorts 第一、第二側妃

The mothers of Raylecia and Leston respectively.

Anna アナ

A half-elf attendant who has served the royal family for successive generations of kings. Like a foster parent to Shun and Sue. As a first-class magic-user, she is an attendant who will fight to protect royalty in time of need. Having feelings of guilt starting from when the brainwashing on her came undone, she is accompanying Shun to the elf village. During the elf village battle she received a fatal wound, and was resurrected by Shun. That became the trigger for Shun's Taboo skill hitting max level.

Clevea クレベア

Like Anna, an attendant who exclusively serves Shun and Sue. In her past she was a heroine who served the kingdom as a knight, and has a muscular body that seems unbelievable for a woman. She retired due to age as a pretext, but during the coup d'état she and Leston came running together to help.

Duke and Duchess Anabald アナバルト公爵夫妻

The father and mother of Katia. A duke who has a strong influence in the Anareich Kingdom.

Palton パルトン

A classmate of Shun at the academy. The son of a knight. Actually, in the original plan he was going to accompany Shun on his journey instead of Katia, but it was tossed.

Oriza オリザ

A teacher at the academy. A middle-aged magic-user with little motivation. Actually, in the original plan he was going to accompany Shun on his journey instead of Anna, but it was tossed. In the original plan there was going to be no female presence except for sensei, so it was going to be a trip full of guys! Or something like that.

Rengzand Empire

The people of the Rengzand Empire.

Sword Emperor 剣帝

The ruler of the Rengzand Empire. Yuugo's father. While he had skill in government, his ability with a sword is average despite being the Sword Emperor. A pitiful person who is being underestimated because the previous Sword Emperor was too great. As a result he is being treated with contempt by the other nobles of the Empire, and is suffering under that weight. In the end, he was brainwashed by his own son and had his real power stolen. In this world maybe royalty tend to suffer misfortune?

Ronant ロナント

WEIRDO. The chief of the imperial court wizards. The most prominent magic-user in the world, an amazing person who has even mastered Space Magic. Yet, he's still a WEIRDO after all. He's probably the strongest genuine human around. As Julius's master, he was somewhat concerned about him. At the beginning he was supposed to have a trivial role, but he got going as one of the established characters unnoticed. Right now he's one of the major characters. Wow, these WEIRDOS are amazin', right. However, he was totally ignored by Shiro.

Aurel オーレル

An imperial court wizard. Second only to Ronant, and is Ronant's Apprentice No.2. Originally she was the daughter of a low-ranking noble, and originally entered Ronant's service as an attendant, but became an apprentice before she noticed, and became an imperial court wizard before she noticed. For herself the situation is like "How did all this happen!?". Amongst the imperial court wizards, even her elders refer to her as "nee-san". Then, while surrounded by the WEIRDOS in the imperial court wizards, her marriageable age came and went.

Ronant's apprentices ロナントの弟子たち

Ronant's apprentices. Despite displaying the same eccentricities as their master, they are stalwarts who were trained hard enough by their master that they developed a bitter opinion of him.

Buirims ブイリムス

A summoner who participated in a unit from the Imperial Army. Not only does he have great ability as a summoner, he is a skilled leader who is also a first-class warrior. Despite that, he failed in the mission to confirm and subjugate a powerful monster in the Elro Great Labyrinth. That monster, a certain spider, annihilated the contingent and he barely escaped alive. Forced to take on the responsibility by himself, he was relegated to the Magic Mountain Range. Some time after being relegated he found out that his daughter had been kidnapped, and while attempting to achieve a great feat that would somehow allow him to return to the Empire he raided a village of goblins. As a result, he triggered Wrath's Wrath skill and was murdered. A victim who was tossed around by the reincarnators.

Nyudoz ニュドズ

A general in the Imperial Army. Deceased. A virtuoso swordsman who was called the Sword Saint. An old veteran who bestrode battlefields together with the previous Sword Emperor. Combined with having an excessively hot-blooded character, he is a lively old man who was always shouting in a loud voice. His original social standing was low, and he was shunned by the nobles because of that, but he was loved by his subordinates. He was defeated by Wrath in the Human-Demon Great War and killed in action.

Teeba ティーバ

Only appears in the published edition. A general in the Imperial Army.

Elro Great Labyrinth Abnormality Investigation Team エルロー大迷宮異変調査部隊

A contingent of knights who were dispatched from the Empire, tasked with the investigation of an abnormality in the Elro Great Labyrinth. They generally consisted of the second and third sons and so on of nobles who had little chance to inherit. The first people to officially make the Nightmare of the Labyrinth known to the world.

Goto ゴトー

An A-ranked adventurer in the Empire. One of the few survivors of the unique ogre extermination.

Negg ネッグ

An A-ranked adventurer in the Empire. Made a mistake during the unique ogre extermination and died.

Rukusso ルクッソ

An adventurer in the Empire. Brought information about the unique orge to the guild.

Kohan, Agiris, Kuwas, Regen コハン、アギリス、クワン、レゲン

Adventurers in the Empire. Made mistakes during the unique ogre extermination and died.

The Hero Party

The members of the party led by Julius.

Julius ユリウス

The Hero and Second Prince of the Anareich Kingdom. Shun's elder brother, born to the same mother. Deceased. A hero-like Hero who possessed both a noble spirit and kindness. Shun didn't get caught up in power struggles because was always admiring his brother as he grew up. As the Hero, he was highly active in trying to save as many people as possible. But, having lost his mother at a young age, and having been defeated by the Nightmare of the Labyrinth and such like, he had also experienced frustrations. He was troubled by the gulf between his ideals and the reality, but he still tried to pursue his ideals. Even though he crushed Blow during the Human-Demon Great War, he lost to Shiro and was killed in action. The muffler he used as a memento was passed on to Shun.

Hyrinth ハイリンス

A childhood friend of Julius, and the successor to a prestigious noble family. Performs the role of the shield of the party, stopping the attacks of the enemy with his own body. Being childhood friends with Julius he is aware of his disposition, and their relationship is one of being close friends and comrades in arms. Being the only survivor of the Hero Party, he is taking action together with Shun. In truth he is actually one of Gyurie's clones. He has been watching over Julius and Shun from the shadows.

Yana ヤーナ

The Saint who serves Julius. A specialist in Light Magic and Recovery Magic, she serves as the rear guard in the party. She loved Julius, and made advances on him constantly, but he smoothly evaded her. While Julius had also noticed Yana's feelings, he thought that since he was chasing his ideals and always participating in fighting then he wouldn't be able to make her happy if they married, so he wasn't able to respond to her feelings. She died together with Julius during the Human-Demon Great War.

Jiskan ジスカン

An ex-adventurer. The eldest member of the Hero Party, having a wealth of experience. For that reason, while he often argues with Julius, when things get critical his position is more one of an adviser stating his opinion. Having mastered various weapons, he is a battle expert and skillful warrior who will change his way of fighting to match the situation. He died together with Julius during the Human-Demon Great War.

Hawkin ホーキン

An ex-thief. Although he was a thief, he was actually the kind of chivalrous thief who would rip off money from vicious nobles and merchants. Julius found him after he had been caught and was just about to be turned into a slave, with the end result that he joined the Hero Party. His combat ability is the weakest in the Hero Party, but because he's well versed in the dark side of society, he's a semi-support member who aids Julius's actions from the shadows. He died together with Julius during the Human-Demon Great War.

The others

Other people who live in various regions.

Potimas Hyphenath ポティマス・ハアイフェナス

The elf patriarch. The Ruler of Diligence who has survived since before the System was put into operation. In general he is the Primary Perpetrator. In general he is the Primary Perpetrator. This is important, so it is mentioned twice. He discovered MA Energy before the System was put into operation, and he is the main reason why the planet was driven to the brink of collapse. His

goal is perpetual youth and longevity. Being entirely focused on not wanting to die he threw the world into a maelstrom of chaos. Both a genius and a natural calamity. He evolved himself into a new species known as the elves, and is continuing his research in order to achieve true perpetual youth and longevity. After the System was put into operation he was threatened by Gyurie to behave himself, and being frightened of that he shut himself inside the barrier. Even so, he got up to various things behind the scenes leading to the current situation. He was defeated by Ariel in the elf village battle, and finally extinguished. While suffering from an obsession of never wanting the end to come, the end finally arrived. Conceptually, he is the worst possible small-fry.

Translation note: “Both a genius and a natural calamity” - a bit of a pun since “genius” (天才) and “natural calamity” (天災) are both read as “tensai” in Japanese.

Dustin the 61st ダスティン六十一世

The Pope of the Divine Word Religion. Even after dying he inherits his memory after reincarnating with his Temperance skill, and is the Ruler of Temperance. Using that ability he has been supporting the humans from behind the scenes since ancient times. While he is given a new name by his parents each time he reincarnates, on becoming the pope he assumes the name of Dustin. After trying to sacrifice Sarel to save the humans in the past, he is willing to sacrifice anything if he can accomplish his mission of saving the humans. Due that strong will he has been taking action for a long time. While being the head of a religion that worships god, he is a cool-headed statesman who will not even hesitate to kill a god. Even Gyurie and Ariel admit that mentally he is a monster.

The Divine Word Religion Dark Ops 神言教暗部

Humans within the Divine Word Religion who are given code names like A6, I4 and so on. An elite group who work as the pope’s hand and feet, who will at times throw down their lives unhesitatingly. They are all special forces that are masters of the art.

John Keren ジョン・ケレン

The lord of the Keren territory in the country of Sariera. Sophia’s father. Deceased. His name appears in the published edition. An excellent lord of the Keren territory that borders the country of Otsu. Taking up opposition against

the country of Otsu due to the monster they referred to as the Nightmare of the Labyrinth, he got dragged into a war. He tried his best to avoid the war, but since the country of Otsu was backed by the Divine Word Religion for their own motives, he was politically isolated, lost the possibility to escape and died. On the verge of death he entrusted Sophia to Merazofis.

Seras セラス

John's wife and Sophia's mother. Deceased. Merazofis loved her. A pious believer of the Goddess Religion, she was convinced that the Nightmare of the Labyrinth was a Divine Beast. A warm and easygoing naturally airheaded beauty. Devoted to her husband, she failed to notice Merazofis's feelings - a sinful woman. Wanting to be with her husband until their last moments, they passed on together.

Noiria ノイリア

An attendant serving the Keren family. She was given the duty of fleeing together with Merazofis and Sophia, but she was killed in an attack from the elves.

Basgas バスガス

An elder guide who operates in the Elro Great Labyrinth. Having more complete knowledge about the Elro Great Labyrinth upper layer than any other, he is a first-class warrior and resourceful guide. After encountering the Nightmare of the Labyrinth, that became a trauma for him and he retired as a guide. Afterwards, feeling there was some kind of fate he became a guide for Shun and co. Incidentally, he hasn't exploded.

Goief ゴイエフ

A man who works as a guide in the Elro Great Labyrinth. Basgas's son. He has acted as a guide for Julius and co in the past. While he has considerable talent as a guide, he refused to be a guide for Shun and co who were on the wanted list.

The Previous Sword Emperor 先代剣帝

His real name is Reigar. A fine old man who retired and handed over the throne of the Sword Emperor to his son. If Ronant is the strongest in magic, then he is the strongest with the sword. Despite being overwhelmingly inferior in status values, he was able to use his finesse to compete with Wrath even with the

Wrath skill activated. But, in his last moments he was unable to fend off Wrath and was defeated.

Gordo ゴルドー

An adventurer in the Elro Great Labyrinth Abnormality Investigation Team. His name appears in the published edition.

Rekin, Onjin, Gaikun, Joria, Justo, Burdon レキン、オンジン、ガイクン、ジョリア・ジュストー、バードン

Adventurers in the Elro Great Labyrinth Abnormality Investigation Team. Their names appear in the published edition.

Monsters

The happy monsters.

frog 蛙

The frog, that's all!

the siblings 兄弟

There's lots of them! But almost none survived!

Translation note: This is referring to Kumoko's spider siblings.

Elro Pekatot エルローペカトット

The strange creature that takes an active part in the manga edition.

deer 鹿

A guy who only showed up in Appraisal. Briefly appeared in the 2nd volume of the published edition.

bat 蝙蝠

A guy who only showed up in Appraisal.

wolf 狼

A guy who only showed up in Appraisal.

petrification lizard 石化蜥蜴

The Basilisk. The first experience of the terror of petrification.

the three good buddies 三匹仲良しこよし

The bunch who are always together in groups of three. Unfortunately for them, they don't gain wisdom as a trio.

centipede ゲジ

There's lots of them. They're crawling all over the place. Gross, nasty.

small rock turtle 岩子亀

Just like its name, a turtle with a rock. Even young ones are quite big and tough.

mouse ネズミ

They're not like something from some fairy tale. Definitely not.

snake 蛇

A rather dangerous monster amongst those in the Elro Great Labyrinth upper layer. Big, long and thick.

bee 蜂

Worker bee. Why are such dangerous creatures like the Asian giant hornet living in Japan? Who knows.

Earth Dragon Alaba 地龍アラバ

During the first encounter it was not a nice opponent. If this was a game, it would at the level where you throw the controller in disgust.

Greater Taratekt グレータータラテクト

A big member of the spider army. Strong.

praying mantis 螳螂

Praying mantis style with six bladed arms.

snail insect タニシ虫

Don't eat it okay!? Absolutely don't eat it okay!?

mysterious creature 謎生物

A walleye pollack. No, ignore that.

pillbug ダンゴムシ

A pillbug with the head of a mouse. If these appeared in a fairy tale the children would cry.

monkey 猿

Avenger. Absolutely does not forgive those who kill their brethren. Ook.

huge monkey 巨猿

These things aren't monkeys, okay.... More like they're definitely descended from Saiya-jin.

Earth Dragon Kaguna 地龍カグナ

Guys like this should definitely not appear at the start of the story. Demand to see the designer!

seahorse タツノオトシゴ

Be bitten by the terror of the terrain! They're excessively cute in the manga edition.

catfish ナマズ

Cute. The idol of the middle layer.

dog 犬

They're cute as expected. Aren't there too many cuties in the middle layer?

sphere 玉

Some kind of weird sphere.

fire frog 火蛙

A frog that has adapted to fire. Frogs are a bit too amazing, hey.

eel ウナギ

Not cute. Also strong. Long, big and thick.

Fire Drake 火竜

Not cute. They also swarm. They're strong, but they became victims. Victims that fell to the threat known as inflation.

Translation note: Inflation in the sense of exponential character growth.

Fire Dragon Rendo 火龍レンド

Like the Earth Dragons, a guy so nasty you'd also want to send a complaint to the designer. Despite that, was crushed by the protagonist at the start of the inflation period. This is definitely strange!

Earth Drake 地竜

A dinosaur from the upper layer. Didn't the dinosaurs go extinct...?

Earth Dragon Geere 地龍ゲイレ

An athlete-like dragon.

Earth Dragon Fuito 地龍フイト

A jack of all trades and master of none-like dragon. If it had reached adulthood it might have become like Alaba.

Arch Taratekt アークタラテクト

A dangerous member of the spider army. If faced normally it'd normally be strong, but it was entrapped by an underhanded technique and killed.

pig 豚

A delicious monster from outside the Elro Great Labyrinth.

Wind Drake 風竜

The master of the mountain that readily challenged intruders to its turf, only to be easily crushed.

Water Drake 水竜

Caught like a fish.

Water Dragon 水龍

Caught like a fish.

the babies ベイビーズ

The Remnants of the Nightmare. They're not mother-cons okay, they're just full of filial piety okay.

Earth Dragon Gakia 地龍ガキア

The leader of the Earth Dragons. Amongst the monsters the strength is first-class. Yet, that didn't work against the Demon King who was outside the norm.

ant 蟻

Worker ants. They were simply minding their own business underground yet they were wiped out.

robots ロボ

They're monsters? They're not actually monsters but they're somewhat similar, probably.

goblins ゴブリン

An excessively noble combat style group. They have a custom of handing over

flower amulets for those warriors who have passed away.

ogre オーガ

A somewhat strong humanoid monster. For goblins to be strong, this world is strange indeed.

Ice Dragon 氷龍

The guardian of the Magic Mountain Range. Yet another one that's so strong you'd want to complain to the designer, yet the furious ogre was much worse.

The Past Arc

The people who appeared in the past arc.

Potimas Hyphenath ポティマス・ハアIFEナス

In general he is the Primary Perpetrator.

Ariel アリエル

A victim of Potimas's human experiments. Having a constitution where she had to keep eating easily digestible food, and having a body that produced toxins that were eating away at it, she was born with serious defects as a living creature. For that reason, it was unavoidable that she spent her days in bed.

Kura クラ

One of the children gathered at the orphanage who were victims of Potimas's human experiments. A blind boy who was the eldest amongst the orphans. Later he was the first Hero and also the first Ruler of Patience. He continued to battle while crying tears of blood, yet he saw out his life without killing humans.

Natalie ナタリー

A child from the orphanage. A girl with slightly pointed ears. The prototype for elves. Later she was the first Saint and the first Ruler of Charity. She supported Kura, and continued to heal the injured.

Gob ゴブ

A child from the orphanage. A timid boy with green skin. His nickname is Gob-gob. Knowing that he had a short life span, he fought in order to protect the other children. In doing so he received a flower bookmark from Ariel, but the day never came when he could return it to her.

Foddway フォドゥーイ

A donor who contributed to the Sariera Society's funds. He was an authority in the financial world, but he became a vampire during a certain incident, and was forced to retire from the world stage. Later he was the first Demon King and the first Ruler of Pride. He turned people into vampire troops, and tormented people for a long time.

Dustin ダスティン

The President of the country of Dazdoldia. He continued to reject MA Energy, forbidding the use of it within his country. After the System was put into operation he was busily engaged in gathering the people together. Later he became the Ruler of Temperance. His physical body died around that time, but his spirit spanned across many generations to continue to protect the people.

Gods

The gods.

Gyuriedistodiez ギュリエディストディエス

The Black Dragon. His nickname is Gyurie. Before the System was put into operation he was a young dragon. He had flexible thinking because of that, was then marked by Foddway, and eventually his way of thinking diverged from that of the dragons. However, precisely because of that he was stuck between a rock and a hard place with regards to the humans the dragons and Sariel, and while being unable to decide what action to take the situation changed around him. He has continued to regret that he couldn't make a choice, yet he still chose to allow himself to be swept along without making a choice.

Sariel サリエル

A stray angel. Since ancient times and before mankind developed civilisation she has continued to perform her mission to protect the primitive creatures. However, while watching over mankind she started to deviate from her mission, and she started to give priority to mankind. She is unable to understand her own feelings, and can only think mechanically and with underdeveloped emotions. Later on she would cause tragedies to be amplified. Currently she forms the nexus of the System, used in place of a battery. Because her energy

has been continuously exploited for many years, she is on the verge of death.

the dragons 龍

A bunch who has gotten up to all sorts of things. The supreme race (LOL). However, because there were only weak lower-ranking dragons on the planet the story is set on, even the strongest of them couldn't beat Sariel. While it is true that the strongest dragon was crushed by Meido-san in the past, that simply shows how strange Meido-san is.

D

The god of the end. Self-proclaimed Evil God. Overall she is the Secondary Perpetrator. Being especially strong even for a god, she is a pillar amongst the gods of the highest rank. She created the System with the motive that it seemed interesting, but despite presenting a method to save Sariel and the planet, she is the cause of Gyurie suffering for a long time. Despite all that, once she completed her updates to the System, there weren't really any dramatic developments so she lost interest and neglected it. The explosion was more or less her just deserts. It was intolerable that the other reincarnators got caught up in it. Shiro, who overall is the Tertiary Perpetrator, was originally created by her as well. She shakes up the story just for the sake of shaking it up for herself looking on as a spectator, and is the worst trickster. Incidentally, she is the perfect example of Potimas's ideal of perpetual youth and longevity. Thus, no matter how hard you try it is impossible to overthrow her. She is a god who will see with her own eyes the end of the universe, thus the god of the end.

Meido-san 冥土さん

The strongest god. A woman dressed as a maid who drags D around telling her to do her job. She seems gentle in appearance, and is a Yamato Nadeshiko type beautiful woman who is well suited for wearing Japanese clothes. Yet she wears maid clothes. Incidentally, she simply wears them as her hobby, and it's not like she is D's maid. Her position is that of a highest rank god like D. In pure combat terms she exceeds D and is the strongest god. She's one of the few who are able to physically silence D and put a stop to her antics. However, it's D's quality to be able to evade her supervision, escape and get up to no good - such an annoyance. Because she focused on combat strength to the very limit, she is weak at other things. It's not like she can't do them though. While her

subordinates tell her “please sit still” and treat her like a hindrance, it’s not like she can’t do them. Definitely not. If you read “218 A maid appears” again, you might see a different side to her.

Translation note: A “Yamato Nadeshiko” type woman is like the Japanese equivalent of “an English Rose” - a beautiful woman who displays the feminine virtues of old Japan.

Oshiete D-Sensei! Lesson 3

D「Welcome back to Oshiete D-se

slice

M「Oh my? Oh my my! Your neck has dropped off so skillfully! Perhaps this could be used as a regular trick at parties? 」

D「It hurts so I shall refrain.」

M「Since you can talk with just your head, I guess your body is not needed then? Okay, finely chopped...」

D「Ahh! My beautiful body has become a corpse that cannot be shown without using mosaic censorship.」

M「Even though you have been reduced to just a head it is highly aggravating that you are so composed.」

D「I have perpetual youth and longevity after all.」

M「First of all, as a punishment for your mischief you shall be a freshly severed head until this corner ends. Okay?」

D「How callous.」

M「O K A Y ?」

D「Yes Ma'am!」

M「Very good.」

D「Starting once again, it is time for the third “Oshiete D-sensei”. Since I am a freshly severed head the tension is somewhat lowered.」

M「Of course it is. If it was not then it would not be punishment.」

D「Sigh. Nai wa. My perfect body has been left in such a cruel state. Nai wa.」

M「Hurry up and proceed.」

D「Yeah, yeah. Well, so that my beauty is unimpaired even as a freshly severed head, cameraman, please use an angle so that anything below my neck does not show.」

M「There is no cameraman. If you do not hurry up and proceed how about I step on you?」

D「Well then, I shall pull myself together and get the show started. For the explanation this time, I wish to roughly cover the Past Arc. Well, to put the Past

Arc in a single phrase, it is generally Potimas's fault! The end.」

M「How blunt.」

D「But it is practically true as well. The stage for the Past Arc is the same planet as the main story but from long ago. At that time it consisted of a scientific civilisation that was slightly superior to that of the current Earth. In that sense there was not much difference to Earth, but there was in fact two large differences. That was the existence of the stray angel Sariel, and the existence of the dragons.」

M「They were nearer the gods in other words.」

D「Indeed they were. That being said, only a few humans knew that Sariel was a god though, and the dragons also quietly passed the time in order to not provoke Sariel, so they did not have a big influence. As a mental image, perhaps you could consider it as being like Earth where Godzilla actually exists.」

M「I have a feeling that that is a bit off though.」

D「Well, I am not really sure what you mean, but for now imagine that there is this ridiculously strong creature there. The dragons cannot be beaten by mankind. If they are not provoked then they stay quiet. However, if you make a move on them then things become terrible. While that much is considered common knowledge, the fact that dragons are gods, or the fact that they came from outer space is not generally known. Such things might have been vaguely conveyed to the oddballs who worship the dragons though.」

M「There was a Dragon Religion, right?」

D「Yes. They probably went behind Sariel's back to instil the idea into people that the dragons are the supreme race. The people who took that literally became believers.」

M「From the point of view of humans, dragons are higher ranked creatures after all. It is perhaps inevitable that they would gather a certain amount of religious faith.」

D「As a result of those beliefs, not just money but their entire fortunes were taken. Blech.」

M「Please do not say blech with a serious expression. It is frankly disgusting.」

D「How dare you use a word like disgusting against this freshly severed head of a transcendently beautiful girl!」

M「Just being a freshly severed head is disgusting.」

D「Sob sob.」

M(So irritating.)

D「Well anyway, that is enough about the dragons. The one who had an eye on the mysterious power of the dragons, was the Primary Perpetrator that everyone knows, Potimas Hyphenath. He was being consumed with not wanting to die, and was researching perpetual youth and longevity. But, of course such a thing could not be realised. But since he could not give up, he had an eye on the magecraft that the dragons used. And dareingly, he kidnapped a baby dragon. He began an analysis of the dragons.」

M「This incident was the trigger that led to the encounter between Sariel and Gyurie was it not.」

D「Yes. Gyurie the young dragon. And, Sariel the guardian of mankind. It was a chance meeting between these two. At first they were in opposition, or rather a relationship where Gyurie just one-sidedly criticised her, but before he noticed it that relationship changed.」

M「It was more or less entirely on Gyurie's side though.」

D「You should not point that out. Well, while those two were going through a slow and awkward stage, Potimas continued his investigation into magecraft, and discovered the power that cannot be seen, MA Energy. The energy he had discovered, was in fact the life force of the planet. It is a dangerous energy to use, as it would push the planet into decline, and eventually cause the planet to collapse. However, even while knowing that, he still made the existence of MA Energy known to the world. The reason being, is that if MA Energy is used, then it would be possible for mankind to evolve. The evolved humans would have elevated physical abilities, and prolonged life spans. Indeed, it was a glimpse of the perpetual youth and longevity that Potimas was seeking.」

M「That being said, it was neither perennial youth nor longevity, and what Potimas was seeking still seemed a long way off.」

D「Indeed. For that reason, Potimas had to perform even more research. However, his repeated and cruel experiments on living people were eventually discovered, and he became an internationally wanted criminal. His research had required an enormous amount of capital, and dependable facilities. Because he had to obtain those no matter what, he required the assistance of various countries. For that reason, he announced the revolutionary energy called MA

Energy, and using that as bait he was able to receive support from various countries behind closed doors. He hid the inconvenient aspects about MA Energy.]

M「How dirty. Truly, how dirty.」

D「Presumably the reason why he also announced the method for evolving mankind, was not simply to grasp the hearts of the rich, but perhaps also with the goal of clinical experiments.」

M「I guess all you can say is “as expected of Potimas”.」

D「Naturally, the dragons did not stay silent about this. Of course the dragons knew the truth about MA Energy, so they immediately informed mankind that it must not be used. However, mankind did not comply with that. As a result, the dragons set out to exterminate mankind.」

M「That is how dragons are.」

D「Indeed, that bunch look down on all other creatures after all. For them it was no different to performing pest extermination. Even though they themselves are just vermin who came from outer space.」

M「The discussion is digressing.」

D「Oops. Well then, we should return to the story. Mankind had no way of opposing the dragons, and they sustained heavy damage, but this is where everyone’s goddess Sariel took action. She saved mankind from the evil influence of the dragons. Whee, so awesome.」

M「Indeed.」

D「Well, the ones at fault were the humans who were using up the planet’s life force like crazy, so from the standpoint of having to safeguard the planet no matter what, you could say that Sariel’s actions were both right and wrong. However, while Sariel’s actions made the situation more complicated when seen objectively, from the point of view of mankind she was surely their saviour. If Sariel had not been there then all joking aside mankind could have gone extinct.」

M「Certainly. When Sariel’s actions are seen from various angles, they look completely different I guess.」

D「From the point of view of mankind she was their saviour. From the point of view of the dragons she was a hopelessly faulty angel who was protecting the insects. I guess you could say that the dragons were completely fed up. Serves

them right.」

M「If they had only cried themselves to sleep in frustration they could have been loveable.」

D「It is futile to expect such things from that lot. Indeed, the dragons made the situation worse. They snatched up the remaining MA Energy and fled into space - how outrageous! That lot stole something completely outrageous.」

M「You simply wanted to say that, right?」

D「They truly did run off with something completely outrageous though. That started the countdown to the planet's collapse. The only way to stop that was to replenish the lost energy. And, then method that was considered for doing so, was to offer up Sariel as a sacrifice. And of course, the one to propose this method, was the Primary Perpetrator that everyone knows, Potimas. Not only that, but this method would not actually succeed, and Potimas was contriving to run off with the energy gained by decomposing Sariel.」

M「How dirty.」

D「Mankind chose to repay the kindness that was received in saving them with ingratitude. At that moment, the Goddess of Salvation appeared! In other words, me!」

M「Salvation (LOL) indeed. Yeah, as if.」

D「That is not the case at all-I. A proper path for salvation was in fact provided. The Primary Perpetrator for the current situation was Potimas after all-I.」

M「It is frustrating that you are not technically wrong.」

D「Upon my magnificent arrival, life-support was provided for the planet and Sariel, and Sariel was used as the nexus to activate the System. This System would recover the power inside the souls of living creatures upon death, and that would be used to supplement the lost MA Energy. Also, so that it could be recovered again and again, with this kind plan people would be reborn on this planet after dying.」

M「How is that “kind”.....」

D「The power inside souls increases due to fighting. For that reason, the people of that world will continue to fight. Until they have finished repaying the debt.」

M「Hearing it that way, it sounds like gladiator slavery.」

D「It is somewhat similar. And so, that's the rough flow of events in the Past Arc.」

M「Wait a moment please. You have left out an important matter.」

D「What would those be?」

M「Why do you think you have been turned into a freshly severed head? Is it not the case that the reason why the general Primary Perpetrator in Potimas Hyphenath was deliberately left alive was because you wanted it? If you had not said something strange to Gyurie, he would have quickly killed Potimas and that planet should have been saved in a much nicer way. Why did you do something like that?」

D「Eh? Obviously because it would be more interesting that w...

slice

M「Well then, this is it for today. Goodbye.」